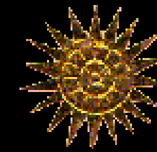




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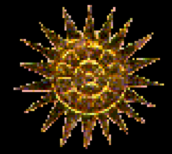
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Was There an Islamic "Genocide" of Hindus?

by Dr. Koenraad Elst

"The Partition Holocaust": the term is frequently used in Hindu pamphlets concerning Islam and the birth of its modern political embodiment in the Subcontinent, the state of Pakistan. Is such language warranted, or is it a ridicule-inviting exaggeration?

To give an idea of the context of this question, we must note that the term "genocide" is used very loosely these days. One of the charges by a Spanish judge against Chilean ex-dictator Pinochet, so as to get him extradited from Great Britain in autumn 1998, was "genocide". This was his way of making Pinochet internationally accountable for having killed a few Spanish citizens: alleging a crime serious enough to overrule normal constraints based on diplomatic immunity and national sovereignty. Yet, whatever Pinochet's crimes, it is simply ridiculous to charge that he ever intended to exterminate the Spanish nation. In the current competition for victim status, all kinds of interest groups are blatantly overbidding in order to get their piece of the entitlement to attention and solidarity.

The Nazi Holocaust killed the majority of European Jewry (an estimated 5.1 million according to Raul Hilberg, 5.27 million according to the Munich-based Institut für Zeitgeschichte) and about 30% of the Jewish people worldwide. How many victim groups can say as much? The Partition pogroms killed hardly 0.3% of the Hindus, and though it annihilated the Hindu presence in all the provinces of Pakistan except for parts of Sindh and East Bengal, it did so mostly by putting the Hindus to flight (at least seven million) rather than by killing them (probably half a million). Likewise, the ethnic cleansing of a quarter million Hindus from Kashmir in 1990 followed the strategy of "killing one to expel a hundred", which is not the same thing as killing them all; in practice, about 1,500 were killed. Partition featured some local massacres of genocidal type, with the Sikhs as the most wanted victims, but in relative as well as absolute figures, this does not match the Holocaust.

Among genocides, the Holocaust was a very special case (e.g. the attempt to carry it out in secrecy is unique), and it serves no good purpose to blur that specificity by extending the term to all genocides in general. The term Holocaust , though first used in a genocidal sense to describe the Armenian genocide of 1915, is now in effect synonymous with the specifically Jewish experience at the hands of the Nazis in 1941-45. But does even the more general term "genocide" apply to what Hinduism suffered at the hands of Islam?

Complete genocide

"Genocide" means the intentional attempt to destroy an ethnic community, or by extension any community constituted by bonds of kinship, of common religion or ideology, of common socio-economic position, or of common race. The pure form is the complete extermination of every man, woman and

child of the group. Examples include the complete extermination of the native Tasmanians and many Amerindian nations from Patagonia to Canada by European settlers in the 16th-19th century. The most notorious attempt was the Nazi "final solution of the Jewish question" in 1941-45. In April-May 1994, Hutu militias in Rwanda went about slaughtering the Tutsi minority, killing ca. 800,000, in anticipation of the conquest of their country by a Uganda-based Tutsi army. Though improvised and executed with primitive weapons, the Rwandan genocide made more victims per day than the Holocaust.

Hindus suffered such attempted extermination in East Bengal in 1971, when the Pakistani Army killed 1 to 3 million people, with Hindus as their most wanted target. This fact is strictly ignored in most writing about Hindu-Muslim relations, in spite (or rather because) of its serious implication that even the lowest estimate of the Hindu death toll in 1971 makes Hindus by far the most numerous victims of Hindu-Muslim violence in the post-colonial period. It is significant that no serious count or religion-wise breakdown of the death toll has been attempted: the Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi ruling classes all agree that this would feed Hindu grievances against Muslims.

Nandan Vyas ("Hindu Genocide in East Pakistan", Young India, January 1995) has argued convincingly that the number of Hindu victims in the 1971 genocide was approximately 2.4 million, or about 80%. In comparing the population figures for 1961 and 1971, and taking the observed natural growth rhythm into account, Vyas finds that the Hindu population has remained stable at 9.5 million when it should have increased to nearly 13 million (13.23 million if the same growth rhythm were assumed for Hindus as for Muslims). Of the missing 3.5 million people (if not more), 1.1 million can be explained: it is the number of Hindu refugees settled in India prior to the genocide. The Hindu refugees at the time of the genocide, about 8 million, all went back after the ordeal, partly because the Indian government forced them to it, partly because the new state of Bangladesh was conceived as a secular state; the trickle of Hindu refugees into India only resumed in 1974, when the first steps towards islamization of the polity were taken. This leaves 2.4 million missing Hindus to be explained. Taking into account a number of Hindu children born to refugees in India rather than in Bangladesh, and a possible settlement of 1971 refugees in India, it is fair to estimate the disappeared Hindus at about 2 million.

While India-watchers wax indignant about communal riots in India killing up to 20,000 people since 1948, allegedly in a proportion of three Muslims to one Hindu, the best-kept secret of the post-Independence Hindu-Muslim conflict is that in the subcontinent as a whole, the overwhelming majority of the victims have been Hindus. Even apart from the 1971 genocide, "ordinary" pogroms in East Pakistan in 1950 alone killed more Hindus than the total number of riot victims in India since 1948.

Selective genocide

A second, less extreme type of genocide consists in killing a sufficient number who form the backbone of the group's collective identity, and assimilating the leaderless masses into the dominant community. This has been the Chinese policy in Tibet, killing over a million Tibetans while assimilating the survivors into Chinese culture by flooding their country with Chinese settlers. It was also Stalin's policy in eastern Poland and the Baltic states after they fell into his hands under the 1939 Hitler-Stalin Pact, exemplified by the massacre of thousands of Polish army officers in Katyn. Stalin's policies combining murder of the elites, deportation of entire ethnic groups and ruthless oppression of the survivors was prefigured in antiquity by the Assyrians, whose deportation of the ten northern (now "lost") tribes of Israel is attested in the Bible.

During the Islamic conquests in India, it was a typical policy to single out the Brahmins for slaughter, after the Hindu warrior class had been bled on the battlefield. Even the Portuguese in Malabar and Goa followed this policy in the 16th century, as can be deduced from Hindu-Portuguese treaty clauses prohibiting the Portuguese from killing Brahmins.

In antiquity, such partial genocide typically targeted the men for slaughter and the women and children for slavery or concubinage. Thus, in 416 BCE, the Athenians were angered at the Melians' reluctance to join the war against Sparta, and to set an example for other client states, Athens had Melos repopulated with Athenian colonists after killing its men and enslaving its women. Another example would be the slaughter of the Jews of Medina by Mohammed in 626 CE: after expelling two Jewish tribes, the third one, the Banu Quraiza, were exterminated: all the ca. 700 men were beheaded, while the women and children were sold into slavery, with the Prophet keeping the most beautiful woman as his concubine (she refused to marry him).

Hindus too experienced this treatment at the hands of Islamic conquerors, e.g. when Mohammed bin Qasim conquered the lower Indus basin in 712 CE. Thus, in Multan, according to the Chach-Nama, "six thousand warriors were put to death, and all their relations and dependents were taken as slaves". This is why Rajput women committed mass suicide to save their honour in the face of the imminent entry of victorious Muslim armies, e.g. 8,000 women immolated themselves during Akbar's capture of Chittorgarh in 1568 (where this most enlightened ruler also killed 30,000 non-combatants). During the Partition pogroms and the East Bengali genocide, mass rape of Hindu women after the slaughter of their fathers and husbands was a frequent event.

At this point, however, we should not overlook a puzzling episode in Hindu legend which describes a similar behaviour by a Hindu conqueror: Parashurama, deified as the 6th incarnation of Vishnu, killed all the adult male Kshatriyas for several generations, until only women were left, and then had Brahmins father a new generation upon them. Just a story, or reference to a historic genocide?

Genocide in the Bible

For full-blooded genocide, however, the book to consult is the Bible, which describes cases of both partial and complete genocide. The first modest attempt was the killing by Jacob's sons of all the males in the Canaanite tribe of Shekhem, the fianc額f their own sister Dina. The motive was pride of pedigree: having immigrated from the civilizational centre of Ur in Mesopotamia, Abraham's tribe refused all intermarriage with the native people of Canaan (thus, Rebecca favoured Jacob over Esau because Jacob married his nieces while Esau married local women).

Full-scale genocide was ordered by God, and executed by his faithful, during the conquest of Canaan by Moses and Joshua. In the defeated cities outside the Promised Land, they had to kill all the men but keep the women as slaves or concubines. Inside the Promised Land, by contrast, the conquerors were ordered to kill every single man, woman and child. All the Canaanites and Amalekites were killed. Here, the stated reason was that God wanted to prevent the coexistence of His people with Pagans, which would result in religious syncretism and the restoration of polytheism.

As we only have a literary record of this genocide, liberal theologians uncomfortable with a genocidal God have argued that this Canaanite genocide was only fiction. To be sure, genocide fiction exists, e.g.

the Biblical story that the Egyptians had all newborn male Israelites killed is inconsistent with all other data in the Biblical narrative itself (as well as unattested in the numerous and detailed Egyptian inscriptions), and apparently only served to underpin the story of Moses' arrival in the Pharaoh's court in a basket on the river, a story modelled on the then-popular life story of Sargon of Akkad. Yet, the narrative of the conquest of Canaan is full of military detail uncommon in fiction; unlike other parts of the Bible, it is almost without any miracles, factual through and through.

And even if we suppose that the story is fictional, what would it say about the editors that they attributed genocidal intentions and injunctions to their God? If He was non-genocidal and good in reality, why turn him into a genocidal and prima facie evil Being? On balance, it is slightly more comforting to accept that the Bible editors described a genocide because they wanted to be truthful and relate real events. After all, the great and outstanding thing about the Bible narrative is its realism, its refusal to idealize its heroes. We get to see Jacob deceiving Isaac and Esau, then Laban deceiving Jacob; David's heroism and ingenuity in battle, but also his treachery in making Bathseba his own, and later his descent into senility; Salomon's palace intrigues in the war of succession along with his pearls of wisdom. Against that background, it would be inconsistent to censor the Canaanite genocide as merely a fictional interpolation.

Indirect genocide

A third type of genocide consists in preventing procreation among a targeted population. Till recently, it was US policy to promote sterilization among Native American women, even applying it secretly during postnatal care or other operations. The Tibetans too have been subjected to this treatment. In the Muslim world, male slaves were often castrated, which partly explains why Iraq has no Black population even though it once had hundreds of thousands of Black slaves. The practice also existed in India on a smaller scale, though the much-maligned Moghul emperor Aurangzeb tried to put an end to it, mainly because eunuchs brought endless corruption in the court. The hijra community is a left-over of this Islamic institution (in ancient India, harems were tended by old men or naturally napunsak/impotent men, tested by having to spend the night with a prostitute without showing signs of virile excitement).

A fourth type of genocide is when mass killing takes place unintentionally, as collateral damage of foolish policies, e.g. Chairman Mao's Great Leap Forward inducing the greatest man-made mass starvation killing 20 million or more, or the British war requisitions causing the Bengal famine of 1943 killing some 3 million; or as collateral damage of other forms of oppression. Unlike the deliberate genocide of Native Americans in parts of the USA or Argentina, the death of millions of Natives in Central America after the first Spanish conquests was at least partly the unintended side-effect of the hardships of forced labour and the contact with new diseases brought by the Europeans. In contrast with Nazi and Soviet work camps, where forced labour had the dual purpose of economic profit and a slow but sure death of the inmates, there is no evidence that the Spanish wanted their Native labourers to die. After all, their replacement with African slaves required a large extra investment.

The Atlantic slave trade itself caused mass death among the transported slaves, just as in the already long-standing Arab slave trade, but it is obvious that purely for the sake of profit, the slave-traders preferred as many slaves as possible to arrive at the slave markets alive. Likewise, the Christian c.q. Islamic contempt for Pagans made them rather careless with the lives of Native Americans, Africans or Hindus, so that millions of them were killed, and yet this was not deliberate genocide. Of course they wanted to annihilate Pagan religions like Hinduism, but in principle, the missionary religions wished to

convert the unbelievers, and preferred not to kill them unless this was necessary for establishing the power of the True Faith.

That is why the mass killing of Hindus by Muslims rarely took place in peacetime, but typically in the fervour immediately following military victories, e.g. the fall of the metropolis of Vijayanagar in 1565 was "celebrated" with a general massacre and arson. Once Muslim power was established, Muslim rulers sought to exploit and humiliate rather than kill the Hindus, and discourage rebellion by making some sort of compromise. Not that peacetime was all that peaceful, for as Fernand Braudel wrote in A History of Civilizations (Penguin 1988/1963, p.232-236), Islamic rule in India as a "colonial experiment" was "extremely violent", and "the Muslims could not rule the country except by systematic terror. Cruelty was the norm -- burnings, summary executions, crucifixions or impalements, inventive tortures. Hindu temples were destroyed to make way for mosques. On occasion there were forced conversions. If ever there were an uprising, it was instantly and savagely repressed: houses were burned, the countryside was laid waste, men were slaughtered and women were taken as slaves."

Though all these small acts of terror added up to a death toll of genocidal proportions, no organized genocide of the Holocaust type took place. One constraint on Muslim zeal for Holy War was the endemic inter-Muslim warfare and intrigue (no history of a royal house was bloodier than that of the Delhi Sultanate 1206-1525), another the prevalence of the Hanifite school of Islamic law in India. This is the only one among the four law schools in Sunni Islam which allows Pagans to subsist as zimmis, dis-empowered third-class citizens paying a special tax for the favour of being tolerated; the other three schools of jurisprudence ruled that Pagans, as opposed to Christians and Jews, had to be given a choice between Islam and death.

Staggering numbers also died as collateral damage of the deliberate impoverishment by Sultans like Alauddin Khilji and Jahangir. As Braudel put it: "The levies it had to pay were so crushing that one catastrophic harvest was enough to unleash famines and epidemics capable of killing a million people at a time. Appalling poverty was the constant counterpart of the conquerors' opulence."

Genocide by any other name

In some cases, terminological purists object to mass murder being described as "genocide", viz. when it targets groups defined by other criteria than ethnicity. Stalin's "genocide" through organized famine in Ukraine killed some 7 million people (lowest estimate is 4 million) in 1931-33, the largest-ever deliberate mass murder in peacetime, but its victims were targeted because of their economic and political positions, not because of their nationhood. Though it makes no difference to the victims, this was not strictly genocide or "nation murder", but "class murder". Likewise, the killing of perhaps two million Cambodians by the Khmer Rouge was not an attempt to destroy the Cambodian nation; it was rather an attempt to "purify" the nation of its bourgeois class.

The killing of large groups of ideological dissenters is a constant in the history of the monotheistic faiths, of which Marxism has been termed a modern offshoot, starting with the killing of some polytheistic priests by Pharaoh Akhenaton and, shortly after, the treacherous killing of 3,000 worshippers of the Golden Calf by Moses (they had been encouraged to come out in the open by Moses' brother Aaron, not unlike Chairman Mao's "hundred flowers" campaign which encouraged dissenters to speak freely, all the better to eliminate them later). Mass killing accompanied the christianization of Saxony by Charlemagne (ca. 800 CE) and of East Prussia by the Teutonic Knights (13th century). In 1209-29,

French Catholics massacred the heretical Cathars. Wars between Muslims and Christians, and between Catholics and Protestants, killed millions both in deliberate massacres and as collateral damage, e.g. seven million Germans in 1618-48. Though the Turkish government which ordered the killing of a million Armenians in 1915 was motivated by a mixture of purely military, secular-nationalistic and Islamic considerations, the fervour with which the local Turks and Kurds participated in the slaughter was clearly due to their Islamic conditioning of hatred against non-Muslims.

This ideological killing could be distinguished from genocide in the strict sense, because ethnicity was not the reason for the slaughter. While this caution may complicate matters for the Ukrainians or Cambodians, it does not apply to the case of Hinduism: like the Jews, the Hindus have historically been both a religion and a nation (or at least, casteists might argue, a conglomerate of nations). Attempts to kill all Hindus of a given region may legitimately be termed genocide.

For its sheer magnitude in scope and death toll, coupled with its occasional (though not continuous) intention to exterminate entire Hindu communities, the Islamic campaign against Hinduism, which was never fully called off since the first naval invasion in 636 CE, can without exaggeration be termed genocide. To quote Will Durant's famous line: "The Islamic conquest of India is probably the bloodiest story in history. It is a discouraging tale, for its evident moral is that civilization is a precious good, whose delicate complex of order and freedom, culture and peace, can at any moment be overthrown by barbarians invading from without or multiplying within." (Story of Civilization, vol.1, Our Oriental Heritage, New York 1972, p.459)

Hinduism's losses

There is no official estimate of the total death toll of Hindus at the hands of Islam. A first glance at important testimonies by Muslim chroniclers suggests that, over 13 centuries and a territory as vast as the Subcontinent, Muslim Holy Warriors easily killed more Hindus than the 6 million of the Holocaust. Ferishtha lists several occasions when the Bahmani sultans in central India (1347-1528) killed a hundred thousand Hindus, which they set as a minimum goal whenever they felt like "punishing" the Hindus; and they were only a third-rank provincial dynasty. The biggest slaughters took place during the raids of Mahmud Ghaznavi (ca. 1000 CE); during the actual conquest of North India by Mohammed Ghori and his lieutenants (1192 ff.); and under the Delhi Sultanate (1206-1526). The Moghuls (1526-1857), even Babar and Aurangzeb, were fairly restrained tyrants by comparison. Prof. K.S. Lal once estimated that the Indian population declined by 50 million under the Sultanate, but that would be hard to substantiate; research into the magnitude of the damage Islam did to India is yet to start in right earnest.

Note that attempts are made to deny this history. In Indian schoolbooks and the media, an idyllic picture of Hindu-Muslim harmony in the pre-British period is propagated in outright contradiction with the testimony of the primary sources. Like Holocaust denial, this propaganda can be called negationism. The really daring negationists don't just deny the crimes against Hindus, they invert the picture and blame the Hindus themselves. Thus, it is routinely alleged that Hindus persecuted and destroyed Buddhism; in reality, Buddhist monasteries and universities flourished under Hindu rule, but their thousands of monks were killed by Ghori and his lieutenants.

Apart from actual killing, millions of Hindus disappeared by way of enslavement. After every conquest by a Muslim invader, slave markets in Bagdad and Samarkand were flooded with Hindus. Slaves were likely to die of hardship, e.g. the mountain range Hindu Koh, "Indian mountain", was renamed Hindu Kush, "Hindu-killer", when one cold night in the reign of Timur Lenk (1398-99), a hundred thousand Hindu slaves died there while on transport to Central Asia. Though Timur conquered Delhi from another Muslim ruler, he recorded in his journal that he made sure his pillaging soldiers spared the Muslim quarter, while in the Hindu areas, they took "twenty slaves each". Hindu slaves were converted to Islam, and when their descendants gained their freedom, they swelled the numbers of the Muslim community. It is a cruel twist of history that the Muslims who forced Partition on India were partly the progeny of Hindus enslaved by Islam.

Karma

The Hindu notion of Karma has come under fire from Christian and secularist polemicists as part of the current backlash against New Age thinking. Allegedly, the doctrine of Karma implies that the victims of the Holocaust and other massacres had deserved their fate. A naive understanding of Karma, divorced from its Hindu context, could indeed lead to such ideas. Worse, it could be said that the Jews as a nation had incurred genocidal karma by the genocide which their ancestors committed on the Canaanites. Likewise, it could be argued that the Native Americans had it coming: recent research (by Walter Neves from Brazil as well as by US scientists) has shown that in ca. 8000 BC, the Mongoloid Native American populations replaced an earlier American population closely resembling the Australian Aborigines -- the first American genocide?

More generally, if Karma explains suffering and "apparent" injustice as a profound form of justice, a way of reaping the karmic rewards of one's own actions, are we not perversely justifying every injustice? These questions should not be taken lightly. However, the Hindu understanding of reincarnation militates against the doctrine of genocidal "group karma" outlined above. An individual can incarnate in any community, even in other species, and need not be reborn among his own progeny. If Canaanites killed by the Israelites have indeed reincarnated, some may have been Nazi camp guards and others Jewish Holocaust victims. There is no reason to assume that the members of today's victim group are the reincarnated souls of the bullies of yesteryear, returning to suffer their due punishment. That is the difference between karma and genetics: karma is taken along by the individual soul, not passed on in the family line.

More fundamentally, we should outgrow this childish (and in this case, downright embarrassing) view of karma as a matter of reward and punishment. Does the killer of a million people return a million times as a murder victim to suffer the full measure of his deserved punishment? Rather, karma is a law of conservation: you are reborn with the basic pattern of desires and conditionings which characterized you when you died last time around. The concrete experiences and actions which shaped that pattern, however, are history: they only survive insofar as they have shaped your psychic karma pattern, not as a precise account of merits and demerits to be paid off by corresponding amounts of suffering and pleasure.

One lesson to be learned from genocide history pertains to Karma, the law of cause and effect, in a more down-to-earth sense: suffering genocide is the karmic reward of weakness. That is one conclusion which the Jews have drawn from their genocide experience: they created a modern and militarily strong

state. Even more importantly, they helped foster an awareness of the history of their persecution among their former persecutors, the Christians, which makes it unlikely that Christians will target them again. In this respect, the Hindus have so far failed completely. With numerous Holocaust memorials already functioning, one more memorial is being built in Berlin by the heirs of the perpetrators of the Holocaust; but there is not even one memorial to the Hindu genocide, because even the victim community doesn't bother, let alone the perpetrators.

This different treatment of the past has implications for the future. Thus, Israel's nuclear programme is accepted as a matter of course, justified by the country's genuine security concerns; but when India, which has equally legitimate security concerns, conducted nuclear tests, it provoked American sanctions. If the world ignores Hindu security concerns, one of the reasons is that Hindus have never bothered to tell the world how many Hindus have been killed already.

Healing

What should Hindus say to Muslims when they consider the record of Islam in Hindu lands? It is first of all very important not to allot guilt wrongly. Notions of collective or hereditary guilt should be avoided. Today's Muslims cannot help it that other Muslims did certain things in 712 or 1565 or 1971. One thing they can do, however, is to critically reread their scripture to discern the doctrinal factors of Muslim violence against Hindus and Hinduism. Of course, even without scriptural injunction, people get violent and wage wars; if Mahmud Ghaznavi hadn't come, some of the people he killed would have died in other, non-religious conflicts. But the basic Quranic doctrine of hatred against the unbelievers has also encouraged many good-natured and pious people to take up the sword against Hindus and other Pagans, not because they couldn't control their aggressive instincts, but because they had been told that killing unbelievers was a meritorious act. Good people have perpetrated evil because religious authorities had depicted it as good.

This is material for a no-nonsense dialogue between Hindus and Muslims. But before Hindus address Muslims about this, it is imperative that they inform themselves about this painful history. Apart from unreflected grievances, Hindus have so far not developed a serious critique of Islam's doctrine and historical record. Often practising very sentimental, un-philosophical varieties of their own religion, most Hindus have very sketchy and distorted images of rival religions. Thus, they say that Mohammed was an Avatar of Vishnu, and then think that they have cleverly solved the Hindu-Muslim conflict by flattering the Prophet (in fact, it is an insult to basic Muslim beliefs, which reject divine incarnation, apart from indirectly associating the Prophet with Vishnu's incarnation as a pig). Instead of the silly sop stories which pass as conducive to secularism, Hindus should acquaint themselves with real history and real religious doctrines.

Another thing which we should not forget is that Islam is ultimately rooted in human nature. We need not believe the Muslim claim that the Quran is of divine origin; but then it is not of diabolical origin either, it is a human document. The Quran is in all respects the product of a 7th-century Arab businessman vaguely acquainted with Judeo-Christian notions of monotheism and prophetism, and the good and evil elements in it are very human. Even its negative elements appealed to human instincts, e.g. when Mohammed promised a share in the booty of the caravans he robbed, numerous Arab Pagans took the bait and joined him. The undesirable elements in Islamic doctrine stem from human nature, and can in essence be found elsewhere as well. Keeping that in mind, it should be possible to make a fair

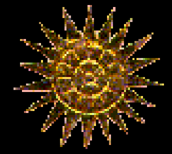
evaluation of Islam's career in India on the basis of factual history.

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Hindus and Neo-Paganism

by Dr. Koenraad Elst

The late Ram Swarup (1920-98), definitely the most important Hindu philosopher of independent India s first half-century, liked to point out that other cultures had traditions similar to Hinduism before Christianity or Islam wiped them out. As he put it in his path-breaking study of polytheism, The Word as Revelation (1980):

There was a time when the old Pagan Gods were pretty fulfilling and they inspired the best of men and women to acts of greatness, love, nobility, sacrifice and heroism. It is, therefore, a good thing to turn to them in thought and pay them our homage. We know pilgrimage, as ordinarily understood, as wayfaring to visit a shrine or a holy place. But there can also be a pilgrimage in time and we can journey back and make our offerings of the heart to those Names and Forms and Forces which once incarnated and expressed man s higher life. (...) The peoples of Egypt, Persia, Greece, Germany and the Scandinavian countries are no less ancient than the peoples of India; but they lost their Gods, and therefore they lost their sense of historical continuity and identity. (...) What is true of Europe is also true of Africa and South America. The countries of these continents have recently gained political freedom of a sort, but (...) if they wish to rise in a deeper sense, they must recover their soul, their Gods (...) If they do enough self-churning, then their own Gods will put forth new meanings in response to their new needs. (...) If there is sufficient aspiration, invoking and soliciting, there is no doubt that even Gods apparently lost could come back again. They are there all the time. (p.131-133)

The cultural process of self-rediscovery after centuries of Christianity is already in full swing in many parts of Europe and North America (I have only little information about other continents and will leave them outside the scope of this article). In Europe, two organizations try to unite the various national groups: the England based Pagan Federation and the Lithuania based World Congress of Ethnic Religions . Both have made a brief acquaintance with Hinduism. Leading Pagan thinker Prudence Jones had a correspondence with Ram Swarup, whose articles on polytheism have also been published in other Pagan media, e.g. in the California based Church of All Worlds magazine Green Egg . The opening conference of the WCER (Vilnius 1998 was attended by three NRI Hindus; one of them was present again this year, and a delegation from India itself was on its way but couldn t make it because of Lithuania s slowness in handling the visa applications. The WCER s leading ideologues Jonas Trinkunas (Lithuania) and Denis Dornoy (French, living in Denmark) also sent a message to the Dharma Sansad, the religious parliament , in February 1999:

To the delegates at the Dharma Sansad, Ahmedabad, 5-8 February 1999:

Respectful greetings,

As workers for the revival of the religion of our ancestors, and as convenors of the World Congress of Ethnic Religions, we are happy and honoured to communicate with the representatives of the world s largest surviving ancient religion, the Sanatana Dharma. We want to pay our respect to the people who have kept alight the Vedic fire for thousands of years, even when besieged by hostile forces, and who are currently guiding Hindu society through the challenges of the modern age.

We wish to draw the attention of the Hindu leaders to the efforts currently made to maintain the ancestral religions of the Native Americans, Africans, and other Pagan peoples in the face of the subversion of their cultures and aggression against their dharmic practices by agents of self-righteous missionary religions. We support the peaceful efforts of all nations to safeguard their cultural and spiritual heritage against subversion and destruction. We also wish to draw your attention to the efforts to revive or reconstruct the ancestral religions of those nations who were overwhelmed by Christianization or Islamization in the past. By common origin or simply by a common inspiration, these ancient religions share a lot with the Sanatana Dharma, in both its tribal and its Sanskritic manifestations. We therefore wish to express our hope and intention of establishing a friendly cooperation.

Clearly, there is a measure of common ground between Hinduism and Pagan revivalism, both typologically (as non-Abrahamic religions) and strategically. At Ram Swarup s suggestion, I have done some participant observation of this movement, or spectrum of movements, in the last couple of years. I have made many friends in these circles, and I sympathize with the whole idea of the revival of the wrongfully eliminated ancestral religions. That said, I do have mixed feelings about the actual performance of this fledgling new incarnation of the old religion, which suffers from some serious childhood diseases. In particular, I would like to draw attention at present to a few problems in the encounter and budding cooperation between Hinduism and Pagan revivalism.

Lifestyle : One thing which is bound to strike Hindu newcomers in certain neo-Pagan circles as uncomfortable, is the seeming predominance of what Indians know all too well as hippyism, the kind of loose and undisciplined behaviour which Western rucksack travellers have displayed while sojourning in India. Wiccas (neo-witches) dancing naked in the moonlight may not be the Shankaracharya s idea of Dharma. And while nakedness as such need not be immoral in any way, the fact is that the looser morality which Asians tend to identify as typically modern-Western is entirely the norm in most neo-Pagan circles. As Fred Lamond candidly admits in his must read introduction Religion without Beliefs, Essays in Pantheist Theology, Comparative Religion and Ethics (Janus Publ., London 1997, p.111): Our practical ethics are 90% the same as those of established religions, but the only area where our principles differ sharply from theirs is in sexual ethics. To Pagans, sexual intimacy before marriage is neither sinful nor immoral (...) we regard shared sexual passion under most circumstances as a sacrament which, far from harming our souls, can be a gateway to self-transcendence and unity with the divine.

The Church of All Worlds even promotes polyamory as an alternative to the monogamous household. The Germanic oriented neo-Pagans (Odinism, Asatru / loyalty to the gods) are more mainstream in this regard, partly because they recruit more among working class people, who are less attracted to artistic variations in lifestyle; nonetheless, one of their most gifted ideologues in the 1980s, Stephen Flowers a.k.a. Edred Thorsson, subsequently touted himself as ¾ in Freudian terms ¾ a zealous polymorphous pervert. Hindus in India, and perhaps even more the overseas Hindus who have experienced a close

knit family structure and the concomitant family values as a great asset in their professional success (Margaret Thatcher s model immigrant community), would probably feel closer to the prudish morality of Evangelicals than to the libertine neo-pagans.

Other Hindu taboos, as on beef-eating or meat-eating in general, are equally foreign to Western neo-Pagans. Though vegetarianism is a major trend in some circles, others celebrate hunting and do-it-yourself slaughtering of your next meal as part of the return to a more natural way of life. Even among the vegetarians, the motive is more often health and ecology (meat production requiring a much larger land surface than the production of vegetable food with the same nutritional value) rather than Hindu considerations such as compassion with all sentient beings and the taboo on touching, let alone digesting, animal tissue in a state of decomposition.

From an orthodox Hindu viewpoint, most neo-Pagan groups would have a status similar to the tribals of forested Central India. Though the tribals are recognized as Indian fellow Pagans, Hindus by Savarkar s definition, they are nonetheless commonly perceived as savages because of their disregard for certain taboos and because of their not so strict morality (as in the common youth dormitories where sexual experimentation is encouraged). The city jungles of the West have somehow spawned a lifestyle similar to that of the tiger infested and snake haunted jungles of India.

Absence of a yogic tradition : Another point which neo-Pagans have in common with the Indian tribals as compared with the literate Hindu-Buddhist mainstream, is that they do not have an established tradition of yoga.

One of the most important fruits of civilization is a system of techniques allowing man to reach beyond the ordinary, world-absorbed (c.q. dream-absorbed) consciousness. This does create an inequality within the broad category of non-Abrahamic or Pagan religions. I am aware that this is bound to put some readers off as being elitist, but there is a real difference between the systematically developed techniques of consciousness as practised in Hindu and Buddhist monasteries (and by laymen every morning and evening), on the one hand, and the whole spectrum of ordinary religious experience on the other: ritual, celebration, devotional practices, even erratic mystical experiences as anyone may have in exceptional moments (from first love to near death experiences). The best way to realize this difference is to meet an accomplished yogi: the quality of profound peace he radiates is unlike anything else. This doesn t mean that other activities, religious and secular, are somehow bad and to be shunned. Not at all: whereas Western adepts of yoga often deride organized religion with its rituals, I have never heard of an Indian or East Asian practitioner who did not observe some calendar of rituals (e.g. Zen as a tradition of meditation is heavily ritualized). Advanced students of yogic techniques don t set themselves against the surrounding folk religion, but adapt to it and add their own insights to it as a jewel to the crown. Both in Chinese Taoism and in Hinduism, we see how folk religion gets transformed by having the spiritual tradition as a point of reference in its midst. Contrary to what early Orientalists imagined, 99% of the people in the Orient are not sages; yet, they are aware of the existence and nearness of such a class of seers, and this infuses their religion with a quality absent in the purely naturalistic Pagan religions.

Did such a spiritual tradition exist within the pre-Christian religions of Europe? In Greek and Hellenistic culture, we certainly see traces of it, but they are usually attributed to Egyptian or Asian influence. The Druids are usually credited with such a tradition, but as far as we can see, their central claim to honour within Celtic society was their memorization of a whole library of mythological and historical narratives. This was similar to the Brahmins learning the Vedas and other classics by heart, which is part of their

karmakanda , ritualism , distinct from the jnanakanda , the search for absolute knowledge developed in the younger layers of the Vedas, the Upanishads. Moreover, as a serious blemish on their reputation as dreamy sages, the Druids were also officiates at bloody sacrifices, allegedly even human sacrifice, which even the robust Romans found repulsive and barbaric. In the development of Vedic religion, we see animal sacrifice phased out in favour of symbolic replacement sacrifices (coconuts etc.), but Druidic religion was prevented from making such progress from barbarity to civilization because it was killed by Roman armies and Christian missionaries. When the neo-Druids in organizations like OBOD, the Order of Bards, Ovates and Druids , practise an altogether more peaceful religion, they can justify that (e.g. when The Times derided them on 22 June 1998 as milk-and-water Pagans for not even sacrificing human virgins on Summer Solstice in Stonehenge) by explaining that they supply the evolution which Druidry would have gone through, had it survived through the last two thousand years.

At any rate, a perusal of the remaining (often distorted) Pagan literature of the Celts and also of the Germanic peoples shows a lot of celebration of life, of courage and passion, and some insightful meditations on the mysteries of life and death, but nothing like a yogic tradition. Neo-Pagans who understand that something is missing make up for it by borrowing heavily from the living traditions of Asia. Thus, the OBOD has imported a lot of Hindu-Buddhist lore into its curriculum as a substitute for the unknown and irretrievable doctrines which the ancient Druids must have taught. To some extent, this is historically justified because European and Asian Pagan traditions did have certain doctrines in common, e.g. the belief in reincarnation is well-attested by Greco-Roman observers of the Druidic tradition, in Virgil s Aeneis and other European Pagan sources. But to some extent, it may be just fantasy: it is really possible that our Celtic and Germanic ancestors did miss out on some philosophical developments which were taking place in more civilized parts of the world. And whatever they did know and teach has largely been lost, or only been registered by Christian monks who didn t understand much of it anymore. So, either way, neo-Pagans trying to supply the innermost teachings to a tradition of which folklore and scanty surviving texts have only preserved a skeleton, have no choice but to look to surviving traditions like Hinduism.

Xenophobia : Alternatively, some neo-Pagan ideologues reject any input from Asian or other traditions. In the Netherlands, the late Noud van den Eerenbeemt, a Germanic heathen, used to teach something he called Runic yoga , meaning a series of body postures imitating the shapes of the old Germanic alphabet signs or Runes. I think this was a bit silly, as Hatha-yogic postures are designed to produce certain effects in the energetics of the body, not to impersonate certain visual shapes. However, some heathens rejected it for a wholly different reason: yoga is a non-European invention, hence unfit for European people . They were apparently unaware that the Runic alphabet itself was once imported from the south, and that the Indo-European languages themselves, and the religious lore they carried, were once imported from the East: at least from Russia, according to the dominant theory, or perhaps even from Afghanistan or India.

Those are the people who reject Christianity on grounds of its foreign origin: an Asian religion unfit for Europeans , just like Hinduism. That is wholly mistaken: if Christianity was an erroneous belief system, it was erroneous even for people in its countries of origin, just as Islam was initially rejected even by the compatriots of the Prophet, the Arabs. Conversely, if Christianity is true, it stands to reason that we should all drop our ancestral religion and embrace Christianity, just like Paul did, and Constantine, and Clovis, and Vladimir.

Hindus stand warned that a minoritarian but activist strand within the Pagan reawakening is motivated by such xenophobia, which is largely based on ignorance or at least on the insufficient realization of the syncretic nature of even their own ancestral religions. Often they are people who care little about religion and more about ethnicity, using religion only to give some colour to their assertion of ethnic identity. My impression is that in the Odinist movement in the USA, with its increasing racial polarization, this white pride tendency is not just an embarrassing fringe, as it is in Europe, but may well represent the mainstream. And if it isn t that yet, it will become predominant in the near future: as whites slip into minority status in the USA, those whites who are on the receiving end of the social changes (remember that Odinists are largely working-class) will probably lose their current inhibitions about racial self-identification on the African-American model. Whereas Christians have their own variety of white racism (KKK, Christian Identity), the large floating mass of secularized white Americans will increasingly find a cultural rallying-point in European, esp. Germanic neo-Paganism. Those Odinists who take their distances from such development will soon find themselves outnumbered by the new recruits for whom colour is more important than religious experiences.

In Europe too we see that purely secular nationalist or racist circles affect Pagan terminology (the Flemish group Odal, the Austrian periodical Ostarra, the German periodical Sleipnir, the widespread use of the Celtic Cross by Euro-nationalists), but because of the more thorough secularization of European culture, this remains more purely a political code which does not interfere with the actual revival of ancestral religion. Most neo-Pagan including Odinist groups in Europe statutorily exclude neo-Nazis, Satanists and other such fringe characters.

In efforts at cooperation, Hindus will not much come into contact with the xenophobic faction among the Pagan revivalists, precisely because the latter are not interested in brown immigrants, except negatively. And except for the identification of Hinduism with the caste system, which in turn has been identified with a kind of racial apartheid system. As you can check in David Duke s book My Awakening, the Bible of the racialist Right in the USA, the Hindu caste system is widely understood as a system imposed by the Aryan invaders on the dark skinned natives to preserve their racial purity. That the Indo-Aryans didn t succeed in the alleged endeavour of race preservation and ended up brown skinned themselves is another matter; fact is that the Vedas are regarded by ignorant Westerners as a description of the subjugation of the browns by the whites, and as an injunction to racial self-preservation.

In continental Europe too, there is a movement of so-called Traditionalists, inspired by Rene Gue non and Julius Evola, who take a similar view of the caste system, and who see it as part of the Indo-European heritage, hence relevant also for the European branches of the great Indo-European family. Obviously, these aren t the friends you need, and if such people approach you, do patiently explain to them that the basis of modern science was laid by dark skinned people like the Harappans: mathematics, astronomy, writing etc. Perhaps that will change their outlook on racial and cultural differences.

Monotheism vs. polytheism : A very minor philosophical point of disagreement concerns the notion of polytheism. To many Western neo-Pagans, this is the central point of difference with the Abrahamic religions, and so they brandish their polytheism as the defining trait of their religion. Thus, the Belgian periodical Antaios calls itself a medium for polytheist studies . While most Hindus have no problem with polytheism, they will find the issue in itself less important: depending how you define god , something can be said for both monotheism and polytheism. The ancient Greek philosophers, though undoubtedly Pagan, nonetheless sought for a unifying principle underlying the whole of creation. It is only because of

the Judeo-Christo-Islamic crusade against polytheism that this has become such a crucial issue for Westerners trying to revive their Pagan roots. As Ram Swarup puts it:

And yet the birth of Many Gods will not herald the death of One God; on the other hand, it will enrich and deepen our understanding of both. For One God and Many Gods are spiritually one. (...) A purely monotheistic unity fails to represent the living unity of the Spirit and expresses merely the intellect s love of the uniform and the general. Similarly, purely polytheistic Gods without any principle of unity amongst them lose their inner coherence. (...) The Vedic approach is probably the best. It gives unity without sacrificing diversity. (...) Monotheism is not saved by polytheism, nor polytheism by monotheism, but both are saved by going deep into the life of the soul. (...) Depending on the cultures in which they were born, mystics have given monotheistic as well as polytheistic renderings and interpretations of their inner life and experiences. (The Word as Revelation: Names of Gods, 1980, p.128-133)

Is Hinduism an ethnic religion? When the WCER constituted itself, there was a lot of discussion about how to formulate its Pagan identity. The term Pagan or Heathen was avoided because members, esp. from Eastern Europe, said that the term had come to sound so negative after centuries of Christian indoctrination, that it simply carried the wrong connotations: immorality, violence, backwardness. The term polytheistic was also not acceptable, because Paganism admits also of pantheistic and even atheistic viewpoints, and within polytheistic frameworks we find that religious practice often takes the form of henotheism, i.e. worship of a single god chosen from among many (what Hindus call the ishta devata, the chosen deity). Another proposal was the old religion or the ancestral religion , terms already used by some Pagan revivalist groups, esp. in Scandinavia (e.g. Forn Sidr, the earlier customs). Personally, I think that would have been the best, as it describes exactly the status of the religion being revived, regardless of its being polytheistic or pantheistic or whatever. It would also be similar to the Sanskrit term Sanatana Dharma, the eternal mores / duty / order .

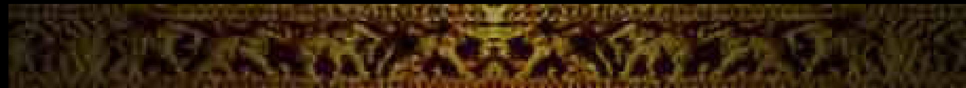
The founding conference settled for the term ethnic , indeed a Greek term by which the Hellenized Jews and first Christians designated the Pagans. Note, however, that as the equivalent of Hebrew Goyim, the nations , it would nonetheless include Judaism itself, this being the ethnic religion par excellence. The founding declaration of the WCER (see www.wcer.org) makes it unambiguously clear that no narrow ethnic exclusivism is meant, it puts the ethnic religions in the framework of universalism . This will prove necessary, for the term ethnic all by itself may well attract all kinds of cranky political ethnicists who will need to be educated about the interwovenness of Pagan religions across ethnic frontiers. Thus, Germanic religion is at the very least composed of the pre-Indo-European native religion of northern Europe plus the religion of the incoming Indo-Europeans, the latter having lots in common with the neighbouring Baltic and Slavic religions, and even with the more distant Greek, Roman, and Hindu religions. When we study the ancient religions, we find that they have lots in common, e.g. their focus on the starry sky as the manifest locus of the gods at play.

For Hindus, the question should be faced whether Hinduism qualifies as an ethnic religion. Historically, that description has a point, yet Hinduism has, starting from the riverine plains of northern India, spread to the farthest corners of the south and the inland hills and forests, assimilating ever new tribes or ethnic groups. It has also spread to Central and Southeast Asia. Today, it is spreading in the West, both by migration and by attracting spontaneous Western converts. So, that is something to think about.

Conclusion : Hindus should welcome the revival of the pre-Christian religions of the West, often cognate

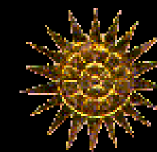
religions through the common Indo-European origins, otherwise at least typologically related religions which are not based on a monopolistic prophet or scripture. At the same time, they should be watchful for impure motives and degenerative trends, or for phenomena which may be acceptable in a multicultural framework but with which they need not involve themselves. The ancestral religions of Europe are at present in a formative stage, a stage of groping in the dark, of gradual rediscovery or self-reconstitution. At this stage they attract people with a variety of motives and divergent levels of knowledge and understanding. Still immature, these religions often look to Hinduism for guidance.

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ARTICLE ARCHIVES



Harsha of Kashmir,
a Hindu Iconoclast?
Koenraad Elst

Whenever the history of the many thousands of temple destructions by Muslims is discussed, the secularists invariably come up with the claim that Hindus have done much the same thing to Buddhists, Jains and "animists". In particular, the disappearance of Buddhism from India is frequently explained as the result of "Brahminical onslaught". Though extremely widespread by now, this allegation is very largely untrue.

As for tribal "animists", numerous tribes have been gradually "sanskritized", acculturated into the Hindu mainstream, and this never required any break with their worship of local goddesses or sacred trees, which have found a place in Hinduism, if need be in what Indologists call the "little traditions" flourishing in the penumbra of the "great tradition". The only break sometimes required was in actual customs, most notably the abjuring of cow-slaughter; but on the whole, there is an unmistakable continuity between Hinduism and the various "animisms" of India's tribes. Hinduism itself is, after all, "animism transformed by metaphysics" (as aptly written in the introduction to the 1901 census report in a discussion of the unfeasibility of separating Hinduism from "animism").

As for conflict with the Jain and Buddhist sects, even what little evidence is cited, turns out to prove a rather different phenomenon on closer inspection. The very few conflicts there were, were generally started by the sectarian Buddhists or Jains. This way, a few possible cases of Shaiva (esp. Virashaiva) intolerance against Jains in South India turn out to be cases of retaliation for Jain acts of intolerance, if the affair was at all historical to begin with. If there was a brief episode of mutual Shaiva-Jaina persecution, it was at any rate not based on the religious injunctions of either system, and therefore remained an ephemeral and atypical event. Likewise, the well-attested persecution of Brahmins by the Buddhist Kushanas remained exceptional because it had no solid scriptural basis, unlike Islamic iconoclasm and religious persecution, which was firmly rooted in the normative example of the Prophet.

Judging from the evidence shown so far, I maintain that Hindu persecutions of Buddhists have been approximately non-existent. The oft-repeated allegation that Pushyamitra Shunga offered a reward for the heads of Buddhist monks is a miraculous fable modelled on just such an episode in Ashoka's life, with the difference that in Pushyamitra's case, as per the hostile Buddhist account itself (Ashokavadana and Divyavadana), no actual killing took place, because an Arhat with miraculous powers magically materialized monks' heads with which people could collect the reward all while leaving the real monks in peace. Art historians have found Pushyamitra to have been a generous patron of Buddhist institutions.

Next to the Pushyamitra fable, the most popular "evidence" for Hindu persecutions of Buddhism is a passage in Kalhana's history of Kashmir, the Rajatarangini (Taranga 7: 1089 ff.), where king Harsha is accused of looting and desecrating temples. This example is given by JNU emeritus professor of ancient

history, Romila Thapar, in Romila Thapar et al.: Communalism in the Writing of Indian History, p.15-16, and now again in her letter to Mr. Manish Tayal (UK), 7-2-1999. The latter letter was written in reply to Mr. Tayal's query on Arun Shourie's revelations on the financial malversations and scholarly manipulations of a group of historians, mainly from JNU and AMU. The letter found its way to internet discussion forums, and I reproduce the relevant part here:

"As regards the distortions of history, Shourie does not have the faintest idea about the technical side of history-writing. His comments on Kosambi, Jha and others are laughable -- as indeed Indian historians are treating him as a joke. Perhaps you should read the articles by H. Mukhia in the Indian Express and S. Subramaniam in India Today. Much of what Shourie writes can only be called garbage since he is quite unaware that history is now a professional discipline and an untrained person like himself, or like the others he quotes, such as S.R. Goel, do not understand how to use historical sources. He writes that I have no evidence to say that Buddhists were persecuted by the Hindus. Shourie of course does not know Sanskrit nor presumably does S.R. Goel, otherwise they would look up my footnotes and see that I am quoting from the texts of Banabhatta's Harshacharita of the seventh century AD and Kalhana's Rajatarangini of the twelfth century AD. Both texts refer to such persecutions."

Let us take a closer look at this paragraph by the eminent historian.

JNU snobbery:

Most space of the para and indeed the whole letter is devoted to attacks ad hominem, much of it against Mr. Sita Ram Goel. In his book Hindu Temples, What Happened to Them, vol.1 (Voice of India, Delhi 1990), Goel has listed nearly two thousand mosques standing on the debris of demolished Hindu temples: nearly two thousand specific assertions which satisfy Karl Poper's criterion of scientific theories, viz. they should be falsifiable: every secularist historian can go and unearth the story of each or any of the mosques enumerated and prove that it was unrelated with any temple demolition. But until today, not one member of the well-funded brigade of secularist historians has taken the scholarly approach and investigated any of Goel's documented assertions. The general policy is to deny his existence by keeping him unmentioned; most publications on the Ayodhya affair have not even included his book in their bibliographies even though it holds the key to the whole controversy.

But sometimes, the secularists cannot control their anger at Goel for having exposed and refuted their propaganda, and then they do some shouting at him, as done in this case by Romila Thapar. It is not true that Sita Ram Goel is an "untrained person", as she alleges; he has an MA in History from Delhi University (ca. 1944). And he has actually practised history, writing on Communism, Christianity, Islam, and Hinduism. I never tested Shourie's knowledge of Sanskrit, but as for Goel, he is fluent in Sanskrit, definitely more so than Prof. Thapar herself. Having gone through Urdu-medium schooling and having lived in Calcutta for many years, he is fluent in Hindi, Urdu, Bengali, English and Sanskrit, and also reads some Persian, elementary Persian being traditionally included in Urdu-medium education. In Hindu Temples, vol.2, a book of which Goel sent Prof. Thapar a copy, he has discussed the very testimonies she is invoking as proof (esp. in the second edition in which he reproduces Prof. Thapar's reply with his own comment),-- yet she maintains that he has not bothered to check her sources.

Note, at any rate, Romila Thapar's total reliance on arguments of authority and status. No less than seven times does she denounce Shourie's alleged (and unproven) incompetence: Shourie has "not the faintest idea", is "unaware", "untrained", and "does not know", and what he does is "laughable", "a joke",

"garbage". But what exactly is wrong in his writing, we are not allowed to know. If history is now a professional discipline, one couldn't deduce it from this letter of hers, for its line of argument is part snobbish and part medieval (relying on formal authority), but quite bereft of the scientific approach.

Reliance on authority and especially on academic titles is quite common in academic circles, yet it is hardly proof of a scholarly mentality. Commoners often attach great importance to titles (before I got my Ph.D., I was often embarrassed by organizers of my lectures introducing me as "Dr." or even "Prof." Elst, because they could not imagine an alleged expert doing without such a title), but scholars actively involved in research know from experience that many publications by titled people are useless, while conversely, a good deal of important research is the fruit of the labour of so-called amateurs, or of established scholars accredited in a different field of expertise. Incidentally, Prof. Thapar's pronouncements on medieval history are also examples of such transgression, as her field really is ancient history.

At any rate, knowledge of Sanskrit is not the issue, for the Rajatarangini is available in English translation, as Romila Thapar certainly knows: Rajatarangini. The Saga of the Kings of Kashmir, translated from Sanskrit by Ranjit Sitaram Pandit, with a foreword by Jawaharlal Nehru, Sahitya Akademi, ca. 1960. With my limited knowledge of Sanskrit, I have laboriously checked the crucial sentences against the Sanskrit text, edited by M.A. Stein: Kalhana's Rajatarangini or Chronicle of the Kings of Kashmir (1892), republished by Munshiram Manoharlal, Delhi 1960. I could not find fault with the translation, and even if there were imperfections in terms of grammar, style or vocabulary, we can be sure that there are no distortions meant to please the Hindu nationalists, for the translator was an outspoken Nehruvian. If I am not mistaken, he was the husband of Nehru's sister, Vijayalakshmi Pandit.

S. Subramaniam's account:

Let us check Prof. Thapar's references, starting with the review article on Shourie's book by S. Subramaniam: "History sheeter. Bullheaded Shourie makes the left-right debate a brawl", India Today, 7-12-1998. This article itself is quite a brawl: "Shourie has nothing to say beyond repeating the Islamophobic tirade of his henchman, the monomaniacal Sita Ram Goel who is referred to repeatedly in the text as 'indefatigable' and even 'intrepid'. Goel's stock in trade has been to reproduce ad nauseam the same extracts from those colonial pillars Elliott and Dowson and that happy neo-colonialist Sir Jadunath Sarkar."

It is, of course, quite untrue that Shourie's book is but a rehashing of earlier work by Goel. As can be verified in the index of Shourie's book, Goel's findings are discussed in it on p.99-100, p.107-108, and p.253-254; that leaves well over two hundred pages where Shourie does have something to say "beyond repeating the tirade of his henchman". Goel may be many things, but certainly not "monomaniacal". He has written a handful of novels plus essays and studies on Communism, Greek philosophy, several aspects of Christian doctrine and history, secularism, Islam, and of course Hinduism. His writings on Islam are much richer than a mere catalogue of atrocities, and even the catalogue of atrocities is drawn from many more sources than just Elliott and Dowson. I am also not aware that he has repeated certain quotations ad nauseam; to my knowledge, most Elliott & Dowson quotations appear only once in his collected works. Finally, Goel's position is not more "Islamophobic" than the average book on World War 2 is "Naziphobic"; if certain details about the doctrines studied are repulsive, that may be due to the facts more than to the prejudice of the writer.

So, practically every word in Subramaniam's evaluation is untrue. No wonder, then, that he concludes his evaluation of Shourie's latest as follows: "But serious thought of any variety has been replaced by spleen, hysteria and abuse." That, of course, is rather the case with Shourie's critics, including Subramaniam himself who keeps the readers in the dark about Shourie's arguments as well as about his own rebuttals. If Romila Thapar refers to his review, it can only be for its "treating Shourie like a joke", but by no means for its demonstrating how history has now become a scientific discipline; all it demonstrates is the bullying rhetoric so common in the debate between the scientific and the secularist schools of Indian history. As a reader (one K.R. Panda, Delhi) commented in the next issue (India Today, 21-12-1998): "The review of Arun Shourie's Eminent Historians ironically hardly mentioned what the book was about. It read more like a biographical sketch of the author with a string of abuses thrown in."

Harbans Mukhia's account:

In his guest column "Historical wrongs. The rise of the part-time historian" (Indian Express, 27-11-1998), JNU professor Harbans Mukhia surveys the influence of Marxism in Indian historiography, highlighting the pioneering work of D.D. Kosambi, R.S. Sharma and Irfan Habib in the 1950s and 60s. He argues that this Marxist wave began without state patronage, in an apparent attempt to refute Shourie's account of the role of state patronage and of the resulting corruption in the power position Marxist historians have come to enjoy. This is of course a straw man: Shourie never denied that Kosambi meant what he wrote rather than being eager to please Marxist patrons. The dominance of Marxist scholarship started with sincere (though by no means impeccable) scholars like Kosambi, followed by a phase where the swelling ranks of committed Marxist academics got a hold on the academic and cultural power positions, and then by a phase where being a Marxist was so profitable that many opportunists whose commitment was much shallower also joined the ranks, and hastened the inevitable process of corruption.

Anyway, the only real argument which Mukhia develops, is this: "To be fair, such few professionals as the BJP has in its camp have seldom leveled these charges at least in public. They leave this task to the likes of Sita Ram Goel who, one learns, does full time business for profit and part time history for pleasure, and Arun Shourie who, too, one learns, does journalism for a living, specializing in the investigation of non-BJP persons' scandals".

It is not clear where Mukhia has done his "learning", but his information on Goel is incorrect. Goel was a brilliant student of History at Delhi University where he earned his MA. In the period 1949-56 he was indeed a "part-time historian", working for a living as well as doing non-profit research on the contemporary history of Communism in the framework of the Calcutta-based Society for the Defence of Freedom in Asia. He did full-time business for profit between 1963, when he lost his job after publishing a book critical of Nehru, and 1983, when he handed his business over to younger relatives. Ever since, he has been a full-time historian, and some of his publications are simply the best in their field, standing unchallenged by the historians of Mukhia's school, who have never gotten farther than the kind of invective ad hominem which we find in the above-mentioned texts by Romila Thapar, S. Subramaniam and Mukhia himself.

As for Shourie, Mukhia is hardly revealing a secret with his information that Shourie "does journalism for a living". The greatest investigative journalist in India by far, he has indeed unearthed some dirty secrets of Congressite and casteist politicians. His revelations about the corrupt financial dealings between the

Marxist historians and the government-sponsored academic institutions are in that same category: fearless and factual investigative journalism. Shourie has an American Ph.D. degree in Economics, which should attest to a capacity for scholarship, even if not strictly in the historical field. When he criticizes the gross distortions of history by Mukhia's school, one could say formally that he transgresses the boundaries of his specialism, but such formalistic exclusives only hide the absence of a substantive refutation. Thus far, Shourie's allegations against Harbans Mukhia's circle stand unshaken.

Kalhana's first-hand testimony:

Now, let us look into the historical references cited by Romila Thapar. Of Banabhatta's Harshacharita, concerning Harsha of Kanauj (r.606-647), I have no copy available here, so I will keep that for another paper. Meanwhile, I have been able to consult both the Sanskrit original and the English translation of Kalhana's Rajatarangini, and that source provides a clinching testimony.

Harsha or Harshadeva of Kashmir (r.1089-1111) has been called the "Nero of Kashmir", and this "because of his cruelty" (S.B. Bhattacherje: Encyclopaedia of Indian Events and Dates, Sterling Publ., Delhi 1995, p.A-20). He is described by Kalhana as having looted and desecrated most Hindu and Buddhist temples in Kashmir, partly through an office which he had created, viz. the "officer for despoiling god-temples". The general data on 11th-century Kashmir already militate against treating him as a typical Hindu king who did on purely Hindu grounds what Muslim kings also did, viz. to destroy the places of worship of rival religions. For, Kashmir had already been occupied by Masud Ghaznavi, son of Mahmud, in 1034, and Turkish troops were a permanent presence as mercenaries to the king.

Harsha was a fellow-traveller: not yet a full convert to Islam (he still ate pork, as per Rajatarangini 7:1149), but quite adapted to the Islamic ways, for "he ever fostered with money the Turks, who were his centurions" (7:1149). There was nothing Hindu about his iconoclasm, which targeted Hindu temples, as if a Muslim king were to demolish mosques rather than temples. All temples in his kingdom except four (enumerated in 7:1096-1098, two of them Buddhist) were damaged. This behaviour was so un-Hindu and so characteristically Islamic that Kalhana reports: "In the village, the town or in Srinagara there was not one temple which was not despoiled by the Turk king Harsha." (7:1095)

So there you have it: "the Turk king Harsha". Far from representing a separate Hindu tradition of iconoclasm, Harsha of Kashmir was a somewhat peculiar (viz. fellow-traveller) representative of the Islamic tradition of iconoclasm. Like Mahmud Ghaznavi and Aurangzeb, he despoiled and looted Hindu shrines, not non-Hindu ones. Influenced by the Muslims in his employ, he behaved like a Muslim.

And this is said explicitly in the text which Romila Thapar cites as proving the existence of Hindu iconoclasm. If she herself has read it at all, she must be knowing that it doesn't support the claim she is making. Either she has just been bluffing, writing lies about Kalhana's testimony in the hope that her readers would be too inert to check the source. Or she simply hasn't read Kalhana's text in the first place. Either way, she has been caught in the act of making false claims about Kalhana's testimony even while denouncing others for not having checked with Kalhana.

Romila Thapar on Mahmud Ghaznavi:

It is not the first and only time that Romila Thapar is caught tampering with the sources. In her article on Somnath and Mahmud Ghaznavi (Frontline, 23-4-1999), she questioned the veracity of Mahmud's reputation as an idol-breaker, claiming that all the references to Mahmud's destruction of the Somnath

temple (1026) are non-contemporary as well as distorted by ulterior motives. It's the Ayodhya debate all over again: when evidence was offered of pre-British references to the destruction of a Ram temple on the Babri Masjid site, the pro-Babri Masjid Action Committee historians replied that the evidence was not contemporary enough, but without explaining why so many secondary sources come up with the temple demolition story. Likewise here: if there was so much myth-making around Ghaznavi's Somnath campaign, even making him the norm of iconoclasm against which the Islamic zeal of every Delhi sultan was measured, what momentous event triggered all this myth-making?

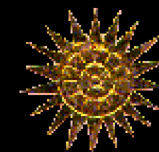
Anyway, in this case the claim that there is no contemporary evidence, is simply false. Though she does mention Ghaznavi's employee Alberuni, she conceals that Alberuni, who had widely travelled in India and was as contemporary to Ghaznavi as can be, has confirmed Ghaznavi's general policy of Islamic iconoclasm and specifically his destruction of the Somnath temple. Alberuni writes (Edward Sechau, tra.: Alberuni's India, London 1910, vol.1, p.117, and vol.2, p.103) that the main idol was broken to pieces, with one piece being thrown into the local hippodrome, another being built into the steps at the entrance of the mosque of Ghazni, so that worshippers could wipe their feet on it. Mahmud's effort to desecrate the idol by all means shows that his iconoclasm was not just a matter of stealing the temple gold, but was a studied act of religious desecration.

He thereby smashed to pieces yet another pet theory of the Romila Thapar school, viz. that the Islamic iconoclasts' motive was economic rather than religious. It is precisely the primary sources which leave no stone standing of the edifice of Nehruvian history-writing.

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THE SACK OF NALANDA

Buddhist Monks and Monasteries of India

by Sukumar Dutta

Introduction

To this long and varied history of the Sangha in India, there was an end swift and sudden, full of terror and pity, like the *denouement* of a tragic drama. The Sangha did not survive perhaps more than a decade the storm and violence of Muslim inroads and conquests in northern India. Lapsed into complete quiescence elsewhere in India, its last accents were still being whispered from the monastic towers of Bihar and Bengal, while round the north of the region, the Khiliji hordes were gathering as for a cloudburst. They were fast sweeping down south. These mid-Asian tribesmen had seen no edifices in their desert home-land and knew but little about architectural styles and distinctions. The tall towers of the monasteries, soaring above the circuit-walls, arrested attention; they easily caused the buildings to be mistaken for military fastnesses: so the monasteries became targets of fierce attack. After the razing of the Odantapura monastery in **AD 1199** by Ikhtiyar Khiliji s soldiers, it was discovered by the marauders that inside were only heaps of books and no hidden arms or treasures and that the place was merely a *madrdsa* (educational establishment) and not a fort. But all the monks had been killed and there was no one to explain to the victors what the books were about. Wholesale massacre was the order of the day; monks and monasteries perished together in a terrible holocaust.

Yet a handful of survivors was left in the trail of the general destruction. They dispersed and fled with their cherished treasures a few bundles of holy texts hugged in the bosom and concealed under the *sanghati* (monk s outer robe). They wandered away to remote, secluded monasteries, far out of the invader s track; or to the nearest seaports to take ship and sail away to Arakan or Burma. But most of them wended their way northwards towards the eastern Hima-layas. Danger dogged their footsteps until, crossing the Himalayan foothills or stealing farther north along the high wind-swept mountain-passes, the hunted found security at last in the more hospitable countries of Nepal and Tibet.

Thus came about the final dispersal of the Buddhist Sañgha in India. The Moving Finger wrote *finis* to its history round the turn of the thirteenth century and, having writ, moved on.

The Devastation

HISTORY holds record of two devastations on an extensive scale of the *viharas* of northern India once

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by Mihirakula in the western sector in the early part of the sixth century, and again, severs centuries later, by Muslim invaders in the eastern sector round tb turn of the thirteenth.

A branch of the Hunas, called Epthalite or White Hunas, ha entered India between AD 500 and 520 and seized ruling power over the border provinces of Gandhara and Kashmir. A Chinese pilgrim Sung-yun, sent on an official mission to India by an empress of th Wei dynasty, arrived in Gandh鲔 in AD 520.

[1] See Beal s *Buddhist Records,* Intro., *pp.* **XV XVI.**

[2] See *Indian Archaeology* for 1955 56 in which finds showing HO~a penetration tc Ko~鐏I are reported.

[3] See Raj chaudhurrs *Political History* **(6th Ed., 5953),** p. 596.

[4] Beal s *Buddhist Records,* **i,** p. 7 .

He found the country devastated by the Hunas and a puppet of the Huna ruler cruelly exercising power.[1] The Hunas gradually penetrated into the interior carved out a kingdom and over it the Huna king Mihirakula held sway in *c.* 518 529. The kingdom included Gandhara and Kashmir and perhaps extended farther east, embracing parts of the Wes Punjab even as far east as Kosambi.[2]

From all accounts, this Huna king was a Saiva by faith .and sworn enemy of Buddhism. Though he had adopted an Indian faith he had imbibed little of Indian culture. The barbarian lust for destruction and vandalism ran in his veins. The Gupta kings fought off and on against the power of the Huna. but it was not till some time before AD 533 that Mihirakula was subjugated by Yasodharmar of Mandasor.[3]

Nearly a hundred years later in AD 63o 631 Hsüan-tsang passing through Gandhara and Kashmir, heard about Mihirakula s devastations. They were then traditional tales in these parts; the[3] are reported by the Chinese pilgrim as he heard them. In G窦hara alone Mihirakula, says Hsuan-tsang, overthrew *stapas* and destroyed *sañghtiramas,* altogether one thousand and six hundred foundations . Perhaps the work of destruction spread as far as Kosmbi, thougt it affected especially Gandhara and Kashmir. But in that ag Buddhism had enough vitality to bind up the wounds inflicted by the Huna depradations lasting just over a decade. Sangha life picked up, at least partially, its broken threads; it went on in new monasteries that rose on the ruins of the demolished ones.

Next, in the early part of the twelfth century there was a fore-gathering in the northern regions of the country of Muslim tribesmen from Afghanistan. They were fanatical Muslims, bent on conquest and predatory excursions, and their advance posed a tremendous threat to all monasteries and temples of northern India. Buddhism had slowly shifted eastwards in the intervening period and was flourishing once again in Magadha under the Pala kings. But its vital strength was at an ebb; it was becoming more and more regional, more and more dependant on outside protection, when the Moslem fanatics were descending southwards in short swift rushes.

In spite of this perilous state of Buddhism in the twelfth century, there were efforts at revival; new monasteries were being built and old ones endowed afresh to keep up sangha life and the monks ministrations.

The most noteworthy of these revivalist efforts is associated with King Govindachandra (AD 1114 1154) of the Gahadvala dynasty and his pious Buddhist queen Kumaradevi. Govindachandra had inherited the throne of Kanouj, shifting his capital to Banaras. Perhaps he wished to revive the tradition of patronage to Buddhism set by Harsavardhana, his illustrious predecessor on the Kanouj throne.

The invaders moving down from the north, who were then known by the blanket name of *Turaska* or *Turk,* were already knocking at the gates of his kingdom and one of Govindachandra s several grants, dated in AD 1120, mentions the levy of a special tax called Turaska danda to meet the cost of warding off the invaders.[2] He was not a Buddhist himself, but his queen Kumaradevi, who had some distant blood-relationship with Ramap甗, a Buddhist Baja king of Bengal, was a devout Buddhist. Both the king and the queen, even in those troubled fear-haunted years with crisis just ahead, were zealously trying to revive monastic life in the kingdom.

In a village Saheth-Maheth (in eastern Uttar Pradesh), anciently Jetavana, a charter of Govindachandra has been found recording the gift of six villages to the Sangha, of whom Buddha-Bhaft鰌ka is the chief and foremost, residing in the Mahavihara of Holy Jetavana.[3]

1 They were in fact Khalijis of Turkish origin. Khalj is the name given to the land lying on either side of the river Helmand in Afganistan. various nomadic tribes had settled in Khalj from very remote times, and under such circumstances it is impossible to assert with absolute certainty that the Khalijis belonged to a particular tribe or *race.History of the Xhalijis* by K. S. Lal (Allahabad: Indian Press, rg5o). P. 14.

2 See Smith s *Early History of India,*4th Ed., p. 400, footnote **I.**

3 *Archaeological Survey Report for* 1907 1908, p. 120**.**

Its date, given according to the Saka era, is June 23, 1130. Another inscription found in the same locality records the establishment of a monastery by one Vidyadhara, counsellor of Madana, king of Gadhipura , most probably a feudatory of Govindachandra. It dates in AD 1219 nearly two decades after the site had been devastated by Muhammad Ghori at the end of the twelfth century.

Kumaradevi wanted to revive ancient Sarnath, near Banaras which was then the Gahadvala capital, and she added the very last monastery to the immense complex that had grown up there from age to age. But nearly all of them were then in almost complete ruin.

Kumaradevi s in fact was the biggest single construction in that monastic complex an immense rectangular structure which was partly built over the ruins of, and partly encompassed, several pre-existing Gupta monasteries and shrines. In this monastery, also in ruins now, a *prasasti* on a stone-slab has been discovered a lengthy poem in Sanskrit in eulogy of the queen Kum毹devi, composed by a poet named Kunda of Bengal versed in six languages , and inscribed on stone by V鐩na, an artist.

It gives us a personal glimpse of the queen, though the description is couched in the conventional hyperbolic felicities: Her mind was set on religion alone; her desire was bent on virtue; she had under-taken to lay in a store of merit; she found a noble satisfaction in bestowing gifts (verse 13). Nor is a

reference to the attractive graces of her person omitted: Her gait was that of an elephant; her appearance charming to the eye; she bowed down to the Buddha and people sang her praise. The *vihara,* built by her, is described as an ornament to the earth and consisting of nine segments *(Navakhanda-mandala-mahdvihara),* expected to last as long as the moon and the sun . Her husband King Govindachandra is spoken of in the *prasasti* as descended from God Han one who was commissioned by Hara to protect Varanasi (i.e. the capital city, Banaras) from the wicked Turaska warriors . Evidently the terror of Turaska invasion was looming ahead: its shadow lay heavy on the minds of all then dwelling in Banaras.

The remains of Kum鲔devis imposing monastery, which, as it appears from inscriptions, bore the name of Dharmacakrajina-vih鲔, measure 760 feet from east to west (on the longer side of the rectangle) and has a central block of buildings. It encompasses several mined viharas. There is an open paved court on the west with rows of monks cells on three sides. There were two gateways to the monastery towards the east, 290 feet apart from each other. The basement of the monastery, eight feet in height, is built of neatly chiselled bricks, decorated with various elegant mouldings on both the outer and the inner faces. But all the halls and apartments have long since crumbled to dust.

1 SeeJournal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal ($r_9 2_5$ Vol. XXI, New Series).

[2] See also Part III, Sec. 4, *p.* **217.**

[3] It is given in the *Archaeological Survey Report for* 1907.1908.

The efforts of Govindachandra and Kum鲔devi to resurrect sangha life at Sarnath on the eve of Muslim conquest were most remarkable, but it seems that both before and after the event, other attempts were made with the same aim and object here arid there in Bihar (Magadha).

Jayachandra *(c.* AD 1170), a king of the same Gahadvala dynasty, has left an inscription at Bodhgaya, which opens with an invocation to the Buddha, the Bodhisattvas and the king s own religious preceptor, a monk named Srimitra and records the con-struction at a place called Jayapura of a guha (cave-monastery). In a hill-region, anciently known as Saptadalaksa near Gaya, a later inscription was discovered, of the reign of a king named Asokacalla, recording the erection of a *vihara* by Bhatta D黜dara at the request of a number of the king s officers who evidently were Buddhists) Such sporadic and strictly localized attempts at revival were made for some years even after the Muslim invaders had overrun nearly the whole of northern India,

Perhaps the strangest story of a monastic establishment outliving the Muslim depradations, is that of N•nda. Here, even in 1235. when the University was but a sprawling mass of ruins, a solitary nonogenarian monk-teacher with a class of seventy students still rang the bell , like President Ewell of the ill-fated College of William and Mary.[3]

The question, whether sangha life and its traditions of so many centuries were entirely uprooted after the establishment of Muslim rule, admits only of a speculative answer. History bears witness in many odd ways that an institution, religious or cultural in character, does not die off even when all its vital organs have been crushed. It retains yet a ghostly sort of life. After the annihilation of monasteries, the

old sangha life, as some scholars are inclined to believe, persisted,

1 Cited in, R. C. Mitra s *Decline of Buddhism in India* (Visva-Bharati, 1954), p. 42.

2 Ibid. p. 43.

3 This is from the eye-witness account of the Tibetan Jima, Dharmasvami who ,isited Nalanda in 5235. See Part V, Sec. 2, pp. 347 378.

The story of President Ewell, preserved by the Yale University Corporation, is ~s follows, In ,SSr, this college had to close its doors for seven years during the civil War in America. The college was deserted and fell into ruins. It was finally overcome by financial catastrophe. But every morning during these seven years, resident Ewell used to ring the chapel bell. There were no students; the faculty ,had disappeared; and the rain seeped through the leaky roofs of the desolate buildings. But President Ewell still rang the bell. It was an act of faith: it was a gesture of defiance. It was a symbol of determination that the intellectual and cultural tradition must be kept alive even in a bankrupt world. only it went underground. But out of its seed sprouted new cults and new monastic orders, of which one, the Mahima-dharma, which sprang up in the eighteenth century at Mayurbhanj in Orissa, offers a most curious, most remarkable and significant instance.[1]

Some scholars hold the opinion that the Buddhist Sañgha tradition was followed by Sa.ñkar鄰rva in the institution of Maths and that the tradition survives to this day in the still vigorously functioning *asramas* set up by Swami Vivek~nanda in India in the last century. These *asramas* function under a central *asrama* at Belur in Bengal and have many establishments all over India.

1 Mahima-dharma was a cult that grew up in Orissa and had a large following. Its adherents created a monastic order, the rules and regulations of which are formulated and set down in its Oriyan scripture. The discovery of this cult and itc monastic order was made by an eminent Bengali scholar, Nagendra Nath Vasu, in the opening years of this century, and an account of it is given in his monograph, *Modern Buddhism and its Followers in Orissa* (pub. in calcutta, igtx). Of the twelve or thirteen ascetic rules. says Mr Vasu at pp. r74 I *75* of the monograph, mentioned in the Buddhistic scriptures, the Mahim鸲harmin monk has even up till now been observing the rules of Pindapatika, Sapad渠-carika, Ekasanika, Pattapindika and khalu-pacchadbhaktika. But these are never found to be observed by Vai~ava monks or ascetics or those of any other sect.

Mahaviharas as Universities

Taranatha s generalized statement that the Turaskas conquered the whole of Magadha and destroyed many monasteries; at Nalanda they did much damage and the monks fled abroad.

(Vi) *The Last Days*

We know on historical evidence that Odantapura Mahavihara was sacked and razed to the ground

round 1198. Round 1234, when Dharmasvami visited it, Odantapura was Muslim military head-quarters.[2] Nalanda, only about six miles off, may have been after the sack of Odantapura a target of attack by roving bands of Muslim soldiery. But this mah•hara was not demolished like Odantapura and Vikramasila, though, as T緐natha says, much damage was done with the result that many monks deserted it. But the very last report about its condition after the worst had been done by the ravagers, coming from an eye-witness, the Tibetan monk Dharmasvami, shows that Nalanda, though doomed to death, was fated not to die, for teaching and learning was going on here over at least four after--decades.

But what a N•nda it was! like the strange nightmare of Hsuan--tsang six centuries back when N暋nda was in all its glory brought up by the whirligig of time.

Yet even then the ghost of past magnificence loomed darkly over the desolation. There were still to be seen seven great lofty pinnacles *(Sikharas)*and out to the north, fourteen.[3] Eighty small viharas, damaged by the Turaskas and deserted by monks, were still there and, beyond, as many as eight hundred. The guess could not, how-ever, have been numerically precise. It is impossible to say when this crop of small vih緐s had gone up; Dharrnasvami says only that a Raja. and his queen had built them probably not very long before the Turaska threat descended. Archaeologists have discovered no trace of them: they were probably of flimsy construction.

But somewhere in this melancholy mass of decayed and deserted buildings, a lingering pulse of life feebly went on.

Somewhere here a nonogenarian monk-teacher, named Rahula Sribhadra,[6] had made his dwelling and taught Sanskrit grammar to seventy students. He was in the last stage of poverty and decrepi-tude. He lived on a small allowance for food given by a Br•ana lay disciple named Jayadeva who lived at Odantapura. Time and again came threats of an impending raid from the military head-quarters there. Jayadeva himself became a suspect. In the midst of these alarms, he was suddenly arrested and thrown into a military prison at Odantapura. While in captivity, he came to learn that a fresh raid on N暋nd岋as brewing and managed to transmit a message of warning to his master advising him to flee post-haste. By then everyone had left Nalanda except the old man and his Tibetan disciple. Not caring for the little remainder of his own life, the master urged his pupil to save himself by quick flight from the approaching danger. Eventually, however the pupil s entreaties prevailing both decided to quit. They went the pupil carrying the master on his back along with a small supply of rice, sugar and a few books to the Temple of Jnananatha at some distance and hid themselves. While they remained in hiding, 300 Muslim soldiers arrived, armed and ready for the assault. The mid came and passed over. Then the two refugees stole out of their hiding place back again to Nalanda.

[1] Schiefners Translation of Taranfltha s *History of Buddhism*, p. 94.

[2] Dharmasvaynt mentions Odantapura in his travel-record twice as the residence of a Tnraska military commander (see *Biography of Dharmasvarnin,* Intro., p. xlii.)

[3] Roerichs *Biography of .Dharmasvamin* (pub. by K. P. Jayaswal Research Institute, Patna, 1959), p. 91.

[4] Dharnaasv枒 s reference may be to R鑿 Buddhasena of Magadha who is said by him to have fled from Gaya into a jungle at the time of Turaska raid on Gaya and returned when the raid was over. He is said to

have been a patron of the N睦nda teacher and his pupils (see *Biography of .Dharmasvjmin,* p. **90).**

[5] R覃la _Sribhadra s name was probably known in Tibet through Dharrnasvamis narrative, for Taranatha gives precisely the same information about Sribhadra and states the number of his pupils as seventy, as told by Dharmasvami (see *Biiogrtsphy* of *Dharmasvamin,* Altekar s Intro., p. vi).

Dharmasv杼 says that the Tibetan pupil could after all complete his studies and, after a brief stay, left the place with the teacher s permission. The libraries had perished long, long ago; Dharmasvami could not get a scrap of manuscript to copy, though some of the monks there possessed a few manuscripts.[1]

This is the last glimpse vouchsafed to us of N蕘nd甍efore its lapse into utter darkness.

[1] This thrilling account of the last days of N•nda is taken from a Tibetah text kept in a monastery of central Tibet of which a photostatic copy was brought by Rahula Sankrityayana and left to be edited and translated with the K. P. Jayaswal Research Institute of Patna. The text is entitled Biography of Chag lo-tsa-ba Chos-rje-dpal the Tibetan name of Dharmasv杼. It was evidently written by a disciple under his dictation. This Tibetan monk-pilgrim visited some districts of eastern India and was in Bihar in 1234 36. He records in the work his experiences in the country. The work has been edited with an accompanying English translation by Dr G. Roerich (Moscow) and published by the Institute. Dharmasv鏞 s account of Nalanda is contained in Chapter X (pp. 90 ff.).

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FATHNAMA I CHITTOR, MARCH 1568

by Ishtiaq Ahmad Zilli

The importance and utility of *insha* literature as source material for history is increasingly recognized. In this vast literature the *Munshat-i-Namakin* compiled during the reign of Akbar, in 1598, holds an unique place became of the information contained in it. It is the largest collection of its kind, so far known, that has come down from the early Mughal period. Its compiler Saiyid Abul Qasim Khan *Namkin*was a noble of some prominence and served under Akbar and Jahangir. Under Jahangir he rose to the *mansab* of 3000.

Among the documents contained in the collection are several *fathnamas* (letters of victory) issued by Akbar at various occasions. These include *Fathnarna-i Chitor* issued by Akbar after the conquest of Chitor. No other copy of this *Fathnama is* known to exist. It was issued from Ajmer, where he stayed for some time en route to Agra, on Ramazan 10, 975/ March 9, 1568. The copy included in the *Munshat-i-Namakin* was sent to the Officers in the Punjab.

Both, owing to the importance of the campaign against Chittor as a political event,and in view of Akbar's subsequent formulation of religious policy (first as an orthodox Emperor, and then, as a proponent of *sulhi-i kul),* the text of the document is of exceptional interest.

A critically annotated translation of the document has been offered.

Translation:
Praise be to Allah who made good His promise, helped His servant, honoured His soldiers, defeated the confederates all alone, and after whom there is nothing. All Praise and thanks-giving behoves that great Opener *(fattah)* of forts and kingdoms in whose grasp are the keys of the conquests of the just and religion *Sultans,* and with whose patent of favour and authority are decorated the *manshurs* of the *Khilafat* and sovereignty of the Victorious Emperors. The Merciful one *(Karim)* whose omnipotence has ensured the victory of the believers through the promise to help believers is incumbent upon us, the Omnipotent one who enjoined the task of destroying the wicked infidels on the dutiful *mujahids* through the blows of their thunder-like scimitars as laid down: "Fight them ! I Allah will chastise them at your hands and He will lay them low and give you victory over them. "Glorified is He, and High Exalted from what they say, His sovereignty is not dependent on any friend and helper.

Whereas the Sovereign one, universal be His bounty and exalted His glory, has, in conformity with I am to appoint thee a leader of the mankind , assigned to us government of the *mumalik* of Hindustan which is one of the biggest countries of the world, and the *Munshi* of the office *(divan khana)* of munificence and the Supreme Sovereign has adorned the radiant mandate *(manshur)*

of our *Khilafat* and monarchy with the *Parwana* Surely we established him in the land and decorated it with the ornament of That is the bounty of Allah, which He giveth unto whom He will All the people who are God's trusts, being in the security of Peace from the hardships and misfortunes of the age, are busy in discharging the obligations of obedience and worship of the Almighty under our benevolent Protection, we deem it our duty to render thanks and express gratitude for this great favour. In accordance with Proceed whither you wish, you are victorious, in whatever direction we Proceed fortune and felicity come forward to greet us and whither we turn the reign [sic] of our resolution the [sic] success and Victory hasten to our Presence. In conformity with the happy injunction This is of the grace of my Lord that He may try me whether I am grateful or ungrateful we spend our precious time to the best of our ability in war (*ghiza*) and Jihad and with the help of Eternal God, who is the supporter of our ever-increasing empire, we are busy in subjugating the localities, habitations, forts and towns which are under the possession of the infidels, may God forsake and annihilate all of them, and thus raising the standard of Islam everywhere and removing the darkness of polytheism and violent sins by the use of sword. We destroy the places of worship of idols in those places and other parts of India. "The praise be to Allah, who hath guided us to this, and we would not have found the way had it not been that Allah had guided us.

The purport of the discourse is that during these victorious times, after the elimination of Ali Quli and (his) ungrateful faction we arrived at the Capital Agra like the noble, victorious , and with a view to augment the materials of our recreation of hunting of elephants we encamped in the confines of Sivi Supar and Gagrun which are on the border of the country of Chitor. There it was brought to our notice that Rana Udai Singh, may God annihilate him, from whom it was expected that he would come forward to welcome, pay respects and kiss the royal threshold or would send his son with *Peshkash,* has adopted, due to excessive pride and conceit, and obstinate and arrogant attitude. (He) is collecting provisions in the fort of Chitor which is his hereditary place of residence and is distinguished in the forts of India in strength and grandeur, with the intention of entrenching himself there. Since the thoughts of war (*ghaza*) and Jihad dominated enlightened mind, it (Rana s behaviour) made the King angry and increased (his) zeal for the divine religion. Despite the fact that most of the royal troops had returned to their *Jagirs* after the last victory and only a few, who happened to be present at the Capital, accompanied the royal cavalcade on this hunting (excursion), we turned our rein to suppress that infidel. Fearful of the approach of the imperial standards he left his uncle, Sahidas Jaimal and Udiban Patta who are renowned for their vaour among the infidels, may God forsake them and lead them to the abode of Perdition, and who are considered to be equal to a thousand horsemen in intrepidity and prowess, with five thousand chosen Rajputs, one thousand troops from his (Rana s) own contingent and ten thousand other men to guard the fort. (The Rana) himself hastened with his troops to Udaipur and Kombalmir which are located in the security of the mountains and jungles. When at the town of Rampur, which is one of the well-known towns attached to Chitor, it became known that he was entertaining such plans, the royal mind decided upon subjugating the fort (of Chitor) with the divine help and only then to take other steps that may appear [sic] feasible. In this way we arrived in front of the fort with the intention of besieging it on Thursday, 20 Rabi II/Oct. 24, 1567. A fort rose in view such as Alburz with all its majesty would appear an insignificant rock at its foot and Tur and Hindukush would fit as walls in its rampart. Its canopy vies with the Crystalline sphere in its height. Its circumference is about three *farsangs* and the calculators are unable to count in battlements.

Though the siege of the fort looked impossible, but by the grace of Almighty and with the secret help of the accomplished people, any direction that we have taken we have achieved there what we have wished, the very same day we inspected the surroundings of the fort carefully, and entrusted each pace to one of the courageous servants (*Khans*, *Sultans* and *Amirs*) of the exalted court who were present. The mountain traversing warriors, who brave the fields of battle and seek Jihad with all their heart and soul and consider martyrdom to be the greatest reward in this as well as the other world, sought permission [to] betake themselves to the towers and fortifications and putting their trust in God and relying on the divine help, which is the source of strength to the imperial authority, carry out brave assaults and bring the fort under control by force. Since those ignoble people had collected such large quantities of weapons for defending the fort like mortars (*deg*), *zarbzan*, Cannon (top), matchlock *(tufang),* Catapult (*manjaniq*), *Jarr i saqil*, naphata (*naft*) and *nawak* that would last for thirty years even if continuously used, and since they had great confidence in these weapons and in the strength of the fort as well as their own prowess, we did not let them (the royal officers) fight with a view of protecting the people of Islam, may God preserve them till the day of resurrection, lest some of them may get killed in rashness.(We) sent for the dragonlike *rads* (Cannons) mortars and other pieces of artillery which were left at the capital. We also ordered the manufacture of cannons and mountain-breaking mortars in the camp and decided that tunnels be dug and after the arrival of battering ram (*sarkob*) and *sabat* (covered passage) an attack be launched, we appointed some troops of the left wing to sack, kill and (take) captives (the people of Udaipur, and the troops and men of Rana who were there while he himself was perched at a distance of ten *Kos*. We sent another army to plunder and sack Rampur. The troop returned with immense booty after dispatching many of the worthless infidels to the abode of perdition. After the arrival of the artillery (*topkhana*), completion of the covered passage (*Sabat*), explosion of the mines causing conflagration and (the consequent) blowing up of the towers and battlements, we directed the troops to establish themselves at the foot of the rampart and surround the fort from every side. The doomed ones (Rajputs) being fully informed this time of the strength and prowess of the army of Islam and the asperity and haughtiness of their ruler (?) they started imploring for intercession and respite with abject submission and some of the chiefs came out (with this petition). Notwithstanding the fact that they have caused death of many people of Islam, both nobles and common soldiers, with matchlock-fire, continuous showering of stone through the *manjaniq,* they sued (for peace) on such impossible terms which could not be conceded. They were permitted to return. Next day we went in person to the *Sabat* of Muhammad Qasim Khad, *mir-i bahr*, which was nearest to the fort and issued orders for *Jang-i Sultani* to be launched.

The armies of Islam placing their reliance in (the revelation) Allah is sufficient for us and most excellent protector , fearlessly and boldly commenced the assault. Within (the fort) the vigilant bands of jew-like infidels set ablaze the fire of conflict and brawl by discharging fire raining *manjaniqs* and cannons (*top*) one after the other. The lions of the forest of intrepidity and the panthers of the mountain of bravery, in their extreme courage stretched their coveting hands to the Sash of the Constellation Orion and with great expedition snatched the diadem from the head of Bahram.

In conformity with the commandment, And prepare against them what force you can, the troops excelled each other end with complete unity betook themselves to the towers and the walls of the fort that were breached by the artillery fire. From that multitude, groups like the pigs hit by

arrows rushed out of doors and blocked the entry of the combatants. In return they (the royal troops) fought back by throwing arrows and stones and scattered those retreating ones (the Rajputs). They sent a tremor through the ranks of the enemy with incessant and frightful cannonade setting fire to the harvest of their lives.

Three days and nights passed in this manner. The two sides did not stop fighting even for a moment. All the attempts of these fox-like people at fraud and deception were frustrated by the lions of the jungle of intrepi-dity. At last on the night of Tuesday, 25th of Shaban, 975 A.H. (23 February 1568) in conformity with ❳..they shall not be able to ward off the fire from their faces nor from their backs, nor shall they be helped the continuous rain of fiery balls and cannonade became so intense in conformity: Nay, it shall come on them all of a sudden and cause them to be confounded those condemned ones were no longer able to resist. The call from beyond If ye help Allah, He will help you and will make your foothold firm was coming to the exalted hearing and every moment the Divine Inspirer made audible the good tidings: Now surely Allah's help is nigh. The revengeful warriors and the brave ones skilled in the use of daggers, deadly set against the enemy and drenched in the blood, delivered concerted assault and succeeded in removing the wooden planks with which those accursed ones had blocked the breaches. Seeing this, Jaimal, one of the three chiefs, who had taken the lead in the battle and was looking after the fort from the beginning to the end advanced with a body of men to stop the breach. In the meanwhile some artillery men belonging to that wretched band fired their guns one after the other (and in their flashes) Jaimal, and these accompanying him could be seen (from afar). As for the last three days and nights we have been present there (battery of Qasim Khan) often firing with muskets and arrows and since it was destined for Jaimal that he should hasten to the lowest parts of hell at our own God-worshipping hands, when he came in view the matchlock *(tufang)* we were holding, was ready as is said, When God wills anything, He provide its means. No sooner he was seen and the gun discharged then the worthless infidel was struck in forehead and hearing the call, where so ever you may be, death will overtake you, even though you were in lofty towers, proceeded to the abode of perdition. This caused great consternation among the high and low of that cattle-like community. (Subsequently) the other chiefs continued to resist but they could not repulse the brave from the openings. At the dawn, the excellent archers whose skill is such that they could pierce the eye of an ant at dark night and the lancers who could pick up the crumbs of the breach from the ground, putting the elephant in front delivered another assault. (They) forced their entry into the fort through sheer bravery and prowess and started discharging arrows and fighting with lances.

The hand of destiny had covered the deceitful eyes of that erroneous, arrogant and scanty host with the nocturnal blindness of ill-luck And they thought that there would be no affliction and so they became blind and deaf, and had blocked upon them the way of success and escape in accordance with They could neither go forward nor turn back. The people of Islam were busy praying: Our lord ! bestow on us endurance, make our foothold sure, and give us help against the disbelieving folk, and the refreshing message Help from Allah and present Victory. Give good tidings to believers was coming to them from heaven. They advanced in groups against the wicked unbelievers to get hold of the opening. (They) stood in the foremost rank without flinching and got an upper hand. They felled them (the Rajputs) one upon the other with the stroke of (their) bloodthirsty sword, leaving an around heaps of the slain. Pursuing the remanent

[sic] who were fleeing in different directions 'As they were frightened asses. Fleeing from the lion despatched them to the lowest part of the hell --when the star of success and good fortune rose from the horizon of the sublime message, Victory comes only by the help of Allah, the Mighty, the Wise the whore victorious troop entered the fort. In accordance with the imperative Command And kill the idolaters all together, those defiant ones who were still offering resistance having formed themselves into knots of two to three hundred persons, were put to death and their women and children taken prisoners. According to the promise, Allah promised you many acquisitions which you will take, immense booty and spoils in cash and kind were acquired. So the roots of the people who were unjust were cut off; and all praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the worlds.

The receptacle of nobility the support of kingdom, the pillar of the mighty state, the prop of the magnificent empire, the confidant of the resplendent *Khilafat,* the foremost among the great *Khans* of the age, the climber of the ladder of authority and dignity, the devoted and sincere are the well wishing one, the intrepid cavalier, the adorner of the ranks in the field of valour and bravery, Mubarizuddin, Mir Mohammad Khan Bahadur, and the receptacle of nobility, the support of kingdom, the Pillar of the mighty state, the prop of the magnificent empire, the best among the sinceres [sic] of the age, worthy of confidence and favour, the rider of the field of battle and valour Qutbuddin Mohammad Khan Bahadur and the rest of the great *Khans* and noble *Sultans* along with the *Saiyids*, *Ulama*, *Mashaikh* the *qazis* of *shariat* and other dignitaries, residents, inhabitants, *Chaudhris, qanoongos* the *ri'aya* and peasants *(muzari'an)* of Sarkar Punjab respectively, being jubilant at the happy sidings carried by this auspicious *Fathnama,* which is, in fact, a foretaste of the victories to follow, should offer infinite thanksgivings. They should also pray in the auspicious moments, when the prayers are more likely to be granted, for the long life of our noble self, the perpetuity of the empire and for the grant of greater competence to us for fulfilling obligation. of *Jihad,* divine worship and acts of piety. Further they should continuously be expecting that day after day doors of fresh victories and succeess will be opened before us.

Whereas after the management of the affairs of Chitor we have turned the reins of our determination towards the capital Agra.

The horse beneath the thigh and overhead canopy of victory,
The victory and soccer keeping company and divine help guiding the way.

God willing within these few days we will reach the seat of the *Khilafat*. The pillar of the state knowing that our thoughts are directed towards the management of his affairs and the fulfilment of the hopes and aspirations of all the well wishers may sent regular reports about the development (in his region). Any request that he might like to make should he communicated (to the court) so that it may be granted. Written by the royal order (to be obeyed permanently) at Ajmer on 10th of the month of Ramzan 975 A.H., 9 March 1568.

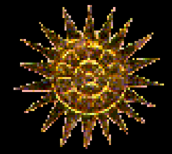
arned work on the army of the great Mughals, p. 276, considers a *Sabat* to be mainly a trench, but, what Nizamuddin and others say it seems to me that there was not much excavation of the ground and that the *Sabat* was mainly a covered way above the surface of the ground. It had earthen walls on each side and a roof of planks, etc.; which was strong enough to carry a sentry box from which a man could fire.

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Spare the Hindu Refugees in Orissa

by Deepak Kumar Rath

The deportation of Bangladeshis is a raging issue in Orissa. The Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik seems to be very keen to repatriate them to Bangladesh.

Ironically the Hindu refugees are also being targeted and are now being served quit-India notices although they have been living in India since before 1971. Thousands of Muslim infiltrators residing in Nawarangpur, Rajnagar (Kendrapara) and Malkanagiri are allegedly creating tension between the tribals aid the Hindu refugees. They are also involved in antinational activities in the border areas of southern Orissa and coastal Orissa. The agony of the Hindu refugees has never been addressed to. They want the State Chief Minister to go into the root of the problem.

The Hindu refugees demand justice from the Government so that deportation is strictly in accordance with law. The successive Congress Governments treated them as mere vote-banks. The blind eye of the administration has helped in creating a number of infiltrator colonies in southern districts like Malkanagiri, Nawarangpur and Rajnagar. The Muslim infiltrators, the police has found, indulge in anti-national activities and keep close contacts with ISI. The detection of illegal radio stations and the arrest of a few suspects in the Rajnagar area of Kendrapara district on May 13, this year have brought to light the activities of infiltrators from Bangladesh and the security breaches made in the vicinity of sensitive defence installations. It is suspected that the transmission centres were set up by Pakistan intelligence posts near the Wheeler Islands using human intelligence operatives. It is also suspected that the radio stations were used to disseminate coded information within a limited radius to some infiltrators, who are suspected to be in the payrolls of foreign intelligence agencies. In India there are officially one crore and twenty lakh infiltrators but unofficially there are about three crore Bangladeshi Muslims. The Bangladeshis who came to India before 1971 are considered to be refugees by the Indian Government. The Orissa Government identified three thousand Hindu refugees and deported 21 of them straight-away In the first phase the Orissa Government has identified 530 Hindu refugees in Umarkot and Raighar, 530 in Malkanagiri and served quit-India notices to 108 in Raighar, Umarkot and 70 in Malkanagiri. But the State Government, it appears, does not pay any attention to the Bangladeshi infiltrators, whose numbers are alarmingly swelling. At the coastal belt of Jagatsinghpur, Kendrapara, Baleswar, Puri and Bhubaneswar, there is a large number of Bangladeshi Muslims. They are engaged in various occupations such as netting the breed of prawn, manufacturing leather items and ferry from village to village.

The 'State Home Department has hinted that these Bangladeshis are engaged in anti-national activities. According to media reports madarsas are mushrooming in West Bengal. The Chief Minister of West Bengal, Buddhadeb Bhattacharya had recently remarked that the madarsas are encouraging anti-national activities. Some of the madarsas are nerve-centres of ISI activities. Sources say that there is a deep conspiracy being hatched by the ISI and other fundamentalist Muslim organisations of Bangladesh and Pakistan to destabilize India's economy, security, culture, demography and democracy.

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What is happening to Hindus in Bangladesh is only too well known to be elaborated here. They are being tortured, their houses burnt and they are being deprived of education, employment and other fundamental rights. The Hindus are treated as second class citizens in Bangladesh. Therefore, there is an exodus of Hindus from Bangladesh to India which should be looked at from a humanitarian standpoint.

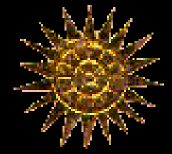
Steps have to be taken against the infiltrators instead of deporting Hindu refugees. For the deportation of Hindus there has to be conducive environment in Bangladesh. The Government of India, International Human Rights Organisations and the Orissa Government should exert pressure on Bangladesh Government to welcome their Hindu citizens back and provide them a honourably living coalition.

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Enemy Property Act (Vested Property) in Bangladesh

by Rabindra Ghosh

On September 6, 1965, a war broke out between Pakistan and India. An ordinance called Defense of Pakistan Ordinance (Ordinance xxiii of 1965) was promulgated to provide special measures to ensure the security, the public safety, interest and the defense of the state of Pakistan. Since the country was threatened by war, Emergency was also proclaimed in the country. Under the provisions of the Emergency powers and the Defense of Pakistan Rules (DPR), the Government of Pakistan passed an executive order on September 9, 1965 named the Enemy Property (Custody and Regulation) Order II of 1965 and there was a cease-fire on September 22, 1965 and the Indo-Pak war came to an end after the Tashkent Declaration.

The then East Pakistan Government also made an order in 1966 under Rule 161 titled the East Pakistan Enemy Property (Lands and Building) Administration and Disposal Order of 1966. Though the war between Pakistan and India came to an end after the Tashkent Declaration, there existed a controversy regarding the question whether there had been an end of war situation between Pakistan and India in the absence of a formal Peace Treaty. Using that controversy, both the central and provincial governments continued to keep the aforesaid orders operative by amending them from time to time. Apparently, the innocent law of war-time, in practice, was implemented completely in a different manner and direction. It created a panic among the Hindu minorities due to historical family ties, some of whose close relations were Indian nationals/residents. At one stage in 1968, the Supreme Court of Pakistan asked the Government of Pakistan to explain its viewpoint on the said Act as the Supreme Court considered it as a political question to be answered by the Government of Pakistan (21 DLR (SC) page - 20). However the Government of Pakistan did not formulate its viewpoint on this question till the independence of Bangladesh. The state of Emergency declared in 1965 was lifted on February 16, 1969. It was expected that with the withdrawal of Emergency, the Enemy Property Law should not remain valid. But the Government of Pakistan promulgated a new Ordinance named the Enemy Property (Continuance of Emergency Provision) Ordinance, 1969 (Ordinance No. I of 1969) on the very day of the lifting of Emergency. On March 25, 1969, Martial Law was promulgated by General Yahya Khan. He cancelled the then existing constitution on April 1, 1969. Again in order to maintain previous Enemy Property Ordinance, a new Ordinance was incorporated with retrospective effect from March 25, 1969. Thus the most discriminatory law against the minority Hindu community in Bangladesh remained in force till the beginning of liberation war on March 26, 1971.

Transformation of Enemy Property into Vested Property--Old Wine in a New Bottle

The proclamation of independence and formation of the Provincial Government of Bangladesh took place at Mujibnagar on April 10, 1971 and the order named Laws of Continuance Enforcement Order, 1971 was promulgated on the same day purporting to keep in force all the Pakistani laws which were in

force in the then East Pakistan on or before March 25, 1971. In other words, Ordinance No. I of 1969, which does not fit with the spirit of proclamation of independence of Bangladesh, automatically remained ineffective in the new state. Bangladesh was not a successor state of Pakistan. On the contrary, Bangladesh established itself by waging a war of independence against Pakistan.

Immediately after liberation, the Government of Bangladesh enforced on March 26, 1972, the Bangladesh Vesting of Property and Assets Order, 1972 (Order 29 of 1972) By this order, the properties left behind by the Pakistanis and the erstwhile enemy properties were combined to a single category. However, in 1974 the Government of Bangladesh passed the Enemy Property (Continuance of) Emergency Provisions (Repeal) Act, Act XLV of 1974, repealing Ordinance I of 1969. But despite the fact of repealing Ordinance I of 1969 (Exhibit-II) all enemy properties and firms which were vested with the custodian of enemy property in the then East Pakistan remained vested in the Government of Bangladesh under the banner of vested property. At the some time, Government also enacted another law namely the Vested and Non-resident Property (Administration) Act (Act XLVI) of 1974. This act, as shown in (Exhibit-III) was enacted to provide the management of certain properties and assets of the persons who are non-residents of Bangladesh or have acquired a foreign nationality. Though the principal aim of the Act XLVI of 1974 was to identify and take over the properties of those residents who left Bangladesh during/immediately after liberation war and/or took foreign citizenship, in practice this Act XLVI of 1974 was also widely used against Hindu minorities who had no connection with Pakistan for quite valid and obvious reasons.

In November 1976, the Government of Bangladesh repealed previous Act No. XLVI of 1974 by Ordinance XCII of 1976 (Exhibit-and with a retrospective effect from the date of enactment amended the Act XCIII of 1976 empowered the Government not only to administer and manage the vested properties, but also to dispose of a transfer the same on long term basis. All the Acts prior to Ordinance XCIII of 1976 (including Ordinance I of 1969 empowered the Government only to become the custodian and to preserve enemy property in contemplation of arrangements to be made in the conclusion of peace with India. But the Ordinance XCII of 1976 made the Government owner of vested properties instead of protector of the same. Thus, the Government encroached the right of ownership, which is a gross violation of the existing laws pertaining to the right to private ownership. These steps undertaken by the military dictator had several dimensions all related to the strengthening of the political-base of the vested groups. First the military rulers wanted to accelerate the process of Islamization, and eliminate the spirit of Bengali nationalism built-upon secularism and developed and rooted through the war of independence of 1971. Second, the military dictators wanted to create a feeling of panic and insecurity among the 9.7 million Hindus (census 1974) as they were considered to be the bridge of Bengali nationalism, culture and spirit. Third the military wanted to establish a strong foothold of the ruling Government and the power mechanism with the local level power structure by providing them the right to acquire vested properties in exchange for collaboration with the Government. Fourth, the military ruler wanted to divert the attention of the economically rising strata of the society from the current socio-political development and by engaging them in the procurement of the property of the emigrant Hindus. It must be mentioned here that in a densely populated country like Bangladesh, getting a chance of acquiring real estate- the prime resource, is considered a great opportunity. All the above stated objectives of the military dictator were accomplished to a great extent.

In 1984 the then president of Bangladesh Lt General Hossain Mohammad Ershad and Chief Martial Law Administrator announced in a conference with the representatives of the Hindu community that

henceforth no new property would be declared as vested property and the properties already enlisted as vested would not be disposed off any more. He also pledged that unless there was any legal bar, the enlisted property would be managed in accordance with the existing Hindu Law of Inheritance. Furthermore the pledge included the declaration that no deity property (i.e. property under Hindu temples and other institutions), property dedicated by Hindu families to Brahmins and the property belonging to the Hindu cremation places would not be disposed off or leased out without the concurrence of the Government. The circular directed the Deputy Commissioners to implement the presidential pledge with effect from 21-6-1990 in the sample unions. The total instances of dispossession related to the Enemy or Vested Property Act among 161 sample respondents during the year 1965-1995 were 179. Over 15 per cent of the total instances that took place during 1982-90 period proved that the above stated pledges and circulars were of declaratory nature only. Furthermore, during the field exploration, a big category of affected persons was found to have not been included in the Vested Property list prepared earlier. The respondents of this category were enjoying their property without any hindrance from the Government till late 1980 s and were paying relevant taxes to the Government. However, in early 1990 s, they were informed that as their properties belong to the category of Vested Property , no taxes could be received from them against those properties. From the Government side, no notice was served to the owners of this category of property. Moreover, these properties were also not leased out. It has been identified that such strange inclusion of property in the vested category, commonly known as red marked properties, started taking place since late 1980 s and was practiced all over the country. For obvious reasons, it would have been difficult for the district administration all over Bangladesh to violate the Government circulars at a time without proper knowledge of the then Government and/or instructions from the some.

Two Paradoxes Related to the Law of Vested Enemy Properties

Paradox-I: It may be recalled from my previous analyses that the term enemy here related has its root in the Defense of Pakistan Rule of 1965 and in the East Pakistan Enemy Property (Lands and Buildings) Administration and Disposal Order of 1966.

On March 23, 1974 the Government of Bangladesh passed two acts in this connection. The first of these two repealed (abolished) the relevant Enemy Property Ordinance of Pakistan and vested the properties already enlisted as enemy properties in the Government i.e., the management and administration of previous enemy properties were entrusted with the government of Bangladesh. The second act, on the other hand, brought the properties of non-residents under the vested category. The second act created scope for fresh enlistment of some properties, including the properties of religious minorities residing in India (no matter whether they were residing on permanent or temporary basis), though this act was not intended exclusively for the religious minorities.

The analysis presented above implies that (a) legally, there can be no new enlistment of properties under the enemy/vested/non-resident category after March 23, 1974. But in spite of this fact, fresh enlistment is still continuing through various government circulars issued from time to time thereafter, (b) the government became the owner of already vested (enemy) properties which is questionable from legal perspective.

Paradox-2: Bangladesh is supposed to be at war with India since 1965: The People s Republic of

Bangladesh is neither a part nor a successor of Pakistan. It severed its ties with Pakistan through its heroic liberation struggle and achieved independence 29 years back, neither Bangladesh nor India waged/declared war against each other. So logically the enemy of Pakistan (i.e. India) cannot be an enemy of Bangladesh. But by virtue of the continuance enforcement order promulgated on 10th of April 1971 all the laws operative in the then Pakistan on or before March 25, 1971 remained valid in the People s Republic of Bangladesh. Though the Enemy Property Act of Pakistan was repealed/amended through various acts/ordinances enacted or promulgated after the Independence of Bangladesh, no government of Bangladesh so far repealed the effectiveness of the Defence of Pakistan Ordinance (XXIII of 1965) of 1965. As a result Bangladesh still remains at a state of war with India. Unless the Enemy/Vested Property Acts are abolished, the harassment of Hindu citizens of Bangladesh would be a never ending process.

The Vested Property Act and the Constitution of Bangladesh

The Vested Property Act is anti-constitutional. Some of the major aspects of the law are as follows:-

Article 11 of the Constitution: Fundamental principles of state policy proclaim that the republic shall be a democracy in which the fundamental human rights and freedom and respect for the dignity and worth of human person shall be guaranteed.

Article 27 of the Constitution: Fundamental rights chapter of the constitution proclaims that "All citizens are equal before law and entitled to equal protection of law."

It is a fact, not a fiction that certain group of people numbered in millions, even in the nineties of the twentieth century, were incorporated as enemies of the country in the truest understanding of the word and were evicted from their and/or (both in *de facto* and/or *de jure*) ancestor s property in violation to the Hindu law of inheritance and the law of ownership of the Hindu joint family. The constitution however has provided the persons of such category also with the right to live under the rule of law and ensured them all the fundamental human rights as mentioned above. It is in contravention to the right of equality before law and entitlement of equal protection of law guaranteed by constitution. The right and privilege of citizens are grossly violated for the said segment of citizens who cannot even seek for relief from the court as the continuance of Defense of Pakistan Rule of 1965 under different names and circulars does not permit them to do so.

Article 2A of the constitution proclaims that "The state religion of the Republic is Islam", at the same time, guarantees that "other religion may be practiced in peace and harmony in the Republic." Also part III of the constitution captioned "Fundamental Rights" bears Article 2 (I) which declares that "The state shall not discriminate against any citizen on the grounds only for religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth."

The vested property act with all its attributes is a gross violation of all the above stated articles in constitution. Firstly, it is a deliberate discrimination to certain section of manifold citizens of Bangladesh due to their religious belief. Secondly, it is contradictory to the right of practicing other religions in peace and harmony in the country. Thirdly, it appears that if anybody practicing Hinduism falls in the category of "enemy of Pakistan" and changes his/her belief and be converted to Islam, then under the earlier

mentioned circular, the person is cleared from being incorporated as enemy. Finally, the places of worship of the Hindus (equivalent to places of public uses) could be vested according to so-called location of God or deity. This is a bitter obstacle for the followers of God to practice their religion smoothly, without any interference.

Article 13(c) guaranteed "private ownership, that is ownership by individuals within such limits as may be prescribed by law". Article 25(1) proclaimed that: "The state shall uphold the right of every people freely to determine and build up its own social, economic and political system by ways and means of its own free choice; and © support oppressed peoples throughout the world waging a just struggle against imperialism, colonialism or racialism."

From the analysis presented above, it is evident that the *de facto* continuance of the law of vested property (though formally repealed in 1974) contradicts the spirit of the proclamation of Independence and at least nine articles of the constitution, and therefore, adequate immediate measures should be taken by the law-makers and the Supreme Court of Bangladesh to recourse the prevailing undesirable situation.

Missing Hindu population- A Major Effect of Enemy and Vested Property Acts

Mass out-migration of Hindu population (mostly to India) during mid-1960 s and thereafter is a reality beyond doubt. Among the various factors responsible for such mass out-migration of Hindu population, the effects of Enemy Property Act and Vested Property Act were important ones. The exact effect of all these factors (e.g. communal riots, Indo-Pak War of 1965, Enemy and Vested Property Acts) is difficult to assess because of a lack of relevant and reliable information. Thus, an attempt has been made to estimate the missing Hindu population using appropriate assumptions.

The size of out-migration was different during various historic periods. For example, the approximate size of the missing Hindu population was as high as 703 persons per day during 1964-1971, 537 persons per day during 1971-1981, and 439 persons per day during 1981-1991. It the above estimates are close to reality, then the inference emerges that the Enemy and Vested Property Acts acted as an effective mechanism for the extermination of Hindu minorities from their motherland, and thereby, affected the process of social-capital formation in our country.

Major Findings and Some suggestions

The process of mass out-migration of the Hindu community had started as a consequence of the Partition of India based on religious grounds. Communal riots became a major cause of concern for the whole nation. Afterwards, the implementation of Enemy Property Act/Vested Property Act has accelerated the process of mass out-migration of Hindu population during mid-1960s and onward.

On the basis of the analysis of Enemy Property Act/VPA, their impact, opinions of the affected and knowledgeable persons as well as the officials (at the Union and *Thana* levels) the following recommendations are made which should be actively considered in order to develop a civil society and to improve the condition of the religious minorities in this country:

1. Vested Property Act, as an encroachment on the law of inheritance, should be abolished. More so, the context under which the "Enemy Property Act" emerged, ceases from the date of proclamation of Independence of Bangladesh in 1971, and there exists a Friendship Treaty with India. Therefore, VPA is anti-constitutional.

2. A list containing details (name, address, amount of land and other assets dispossessed by type and year of dispossession, dag, khatian, mouza, current status etc.) of those affected by EPA/VPA should be published by the Government.

3. All activities related to the identification and enlistment of any property as vested should be banned, immediately. In this regard, a declaration in the mass media should be the immediate action of the democratic government.

4. All vested property under the custody of the government should be leased out to real owners or their legal heirs who are permanent residents of Bangladesh till the final settlement of the problem. In this regard preference should be assigned in accordance with the law of inheritance.

5. No property should be taken to the custody of the vested property administration if the owners of the property of their legal inheritors are in possession of that property.

6. All 99 years leases of vested properties should be declared null and void and the ownership rights of the original owners or their inheritors should be established if they are the *bona-fide* citizens of Bangladesh.

7. All vested deity property and places of cremation should be unvested and brought under public trust. The leased-out or sold-out properties belonging to this category should be declared void.

8. Law of inheritance should be enforced with an adequate provision for women inheritance. If the male heirs of the property are absent and the females are permanently resident in Bangladesh, the property should be leased out to them until a final settlement is made.

9. The Government of Bangladesh should be pressurized to repeal this sort of black law for the greater interest of better relationship with India; otherwise the exodus of Hindu minorities will be a great problem for India.

Source: Organiser (Vol. LI, No. 39)

Islam Declared as State Religion in the Constitution of Bangladesh

Rabindra Ghosh

Hindu, Buddhist and Christian Unity Council was formed in Bangladesh in May 1988 when a bill was introduced and passed at Parliament with a view to making Islam as state religion of the country. Bangladesh was created through liberation struggle with the help of India in the year 1971 with the promise that it would be a secular state. Because of the very existence of Islam as state religion in the Constitution of Bangladesh, equality of adherents of all religions cannot be guaranteed as in a secular state. Above all, during the liberation war, several temples including 500-year-old "Ramna Kali Mandir" and the "Ma Anandamayee Ashram" in the capital city at Dhaka were irreparably damaged by the Pakistani Army. But it is unfortunate that till today after 29 years of the Independence those temples were not reconstructed nor any steps were taken to repair the same for obvious reasons which added a black chapter for the whole nation of Bangladesh. On the contrary, the site of the former temple was converted into a public playground. People of the minority Hindu, Buddhist and the Christian communities have completely lost their faith in the state policy. The communal rioting in October 1990 is not an accidental, isolated affair but a systematic and continuous practice of communal state policy, since the establishment of Pakistan in 1947. This has been putting tremendous pressure on the Hindus to leave the country and the process is very much systematic. The people of minority communities are now prey to serious insecurity and uncertainty. They have been given to believe that former Pakistan and present Bangladesh were created exclusively for the Muslims. The Islamic state character revealed a deep-rooted political crisis, which has already generated many questions regarding national unity and solidarity of members of different religions in the Bangladesh.

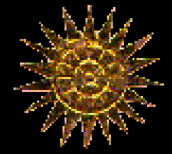
Source: Organiser (Vol. LI, No. 39)

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Prahladapuri Temple Case

Place: Multan, Punjab (Pakistan)
Year: 1881
Incident: Prahladapuri Temple Case:

Multan was described as a prosperous Hindu city when Hsuan Tsang visited it in the first half of the 7th century C.E. From ancient times, when it was called Moolasthana , it had two prominent Hindu shrines: The Prahladapuri temple associated with the Narasingha Avataar of Lord Vishnu, and the Sun temple. In the early decades of the 8th century however, the Muslim Arabs invaded and occupied it, starting a millennium long Islamic domination of the region. In this period, the region saw a steady influx of fanatical Muslim divines called Pirs and other trans-Indus Muslim communities like Pathans. A combination of Islamic persecutions, divestiture of all temporal powers of Hindus and fervent Muslim religious preaching to a disheveled Hindu community reduced the latter to a 20% minority by the turn of the 19th century. Mismanagement by generations of Muslim rulers and predatory raids by neighboring Muslim tribes had reduced Multan to a desolate region living primarily by subsistence agriculture and some trade by the medieval times. In the beginning of the 19th century, the Sikh army from Lahore invaded and captured the region, and after a gap of more than a 1000 years, the Hindus heaved a sigh of relief, being freed of Islamic domination. Their enterprise made them leaders in trade and banking in the Multan district by 1850 C.E. The Sikh rule gave way to the religiously neutral British rule after the Punjab wars. Taking advantage of an unfettered environment, Hindus took the lead in acquiring modern education, and soon went on to control the economy of the region, to some extent. Still rooted in medieval beliefs, the Muslim community floundered in contrast.

The famous Sun temple had been destroyed by Muslim rulers in the early centuries of the 2nd millennium and even its site was forgotten. The fabled Prahladapuri temple suffered several material losses and was reduced to a non-descript shrine by the 19th century, overshadowed by a late Muslim shrine in the vicinity. As the Hindus started regaining their well-deserved position in the Multani society, they became more assertive and confident and contemplated the improvement of the appearance of the shrine. The problem was that close to the temple was the fabulous Muslim shrine, built on land that was believed to have been usurped from Hindus. The Muslim shrine keeper objected to these architectural improvements on rather specious grounds. The communal atmosphere got further vitiated by a number of factors including the anti-cow slaughter movement by Multani Hindus and eventually, in 1881, a riot broke out in which 2 mosques and 22 temples were destroyed. The British government of Punjab played a partisan role and in pursuit of their divide and rule policy, sided with the Muslims. There were hardly any convictions for the destruction of 22 Hindu temples whereas a disproportionate number of Hindus were convicted. During the riot, the Prahladapuri temple was also sacked and obliterated.

While Hindus might have played a role in promoting communal tension, the fact remains that there is no justification for Muslim objections on the renovation of the Hindu temple that had been severely

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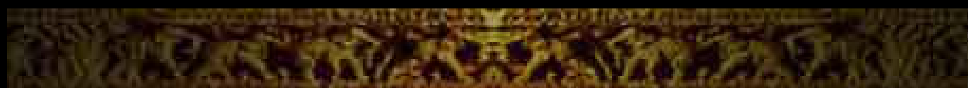
damaged under the millennium long Islamic rule. The Hindu temple was a shrine revered by all Hindus of India whereas the adjacent Muslim shrine was of mere local importance. The speed with which the Muslim masses appeared and destroyed 22 Hindu temples is indicative of the fact that even common Muslims behave in a very volatile manner when it comes to dealing with non-Muslims. Also noteworthy is the fact that the Muslims do not think twice before raising gigantic mosques in the midst of places help sacred by members of other religions. For instance, the Muslims have forcefully occupied land in Hindu pilgrim centers like Mathura and Varanasi and have constructed massive mosques that tower over the Hindu religious structures. Even in modern times, Muslims have spent millions to raise mosques in the heart of non-Muslim cities like London. Apparently, Muslims demand and expect freedom of religion when they are in a minority, but deny the same to non-Muslims in areas where the former are in a majority. The inherent intolerance in Islam and the attitude of us versus them makes all expressions of the religion of their non-Muslim neighbors appear ostentatious and offensive to the eyes of non-Muslims, as the Prahladapuri temple case also demonstrates.

The 1940 s saw a total decimation of the Hindu minority of Multan, but a description of the same is beyond the scope of this note. Recent visitors to Multan report that the remnants of the temple were finally burnt down in 1992, when approximately 100 temples were demolished in Pakistan in the month of December the same year.

Reference:

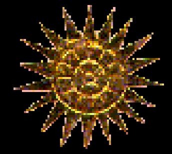
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Attacks on Srirangam Temple

by Vishal Agarwal

1311C.E.- Attacks by Malik Kafur, the general of Allauddin Khilji:

According the traditional accounts, the Muslim army lead by Malik Kafur entered the Srirangam temple throught the northern gateway of the 3rd enclosure. The resistance of the Brahmins was overcome easily, the treasury and the storehouse were plundered and numerous icons were desecrated and destroyed. Malik Kafur s foray however did not last long and soon, he retreated to the north with all the treasure he had looted from the temples of South India. The temple rituals resumed as before after the Muslim army retreated.

1323 C.E.- Ulugh Khans expedition and the sack of Srirangam temple:

Ghiyas-ud-din Tuglaq, the Sultan of Delhi, deputed his eldest son Ulugh Khan to invade the Hindu kingdoms of South India in 1321 C.E. When the Muslim army of Ulugh Khan was close to the Srirangam temple, a festival was being conducted, in the course of which the procession image of Lord Ranganath was taken to a nearby shrine. The gathered devotees decided to keep the image where it was and the festival was continued. When the invaders reached Samayapuram, Srirangarajanathan Vaduldesika, a senior official of the temple, decided that no time was to be lost, and commanding the 12000 ascetics who had gathered there not to disperse, he sent away the procession image of the deity in the southern direction secretly, with Pillai Lokacarya as the guide of the secret party. Then, he dispatched secretly the image of Sriranga Nacciyar and a few boxes of treasure with a few attendants to a safe place, locked the doors of the sanctum sanctorum, barred the doorways of the shrines of both Lord Ranganayaka and Devi Ranganayika, placed pseudo images outside and then fled to the shrine of Panvijavian. The invading army desecrated the shrine, killed all the 12000 ascetics, including the great scholar Sri Sundarsana Bhatta. Another sage, Sri Vedanta Desika, hid himself amongst the corpses together with the sole manuscript of the Srutaprakasika, the magnum opus of Sri Sudarsana, and also the latter s two sons. When the massacre was over, they fled to Satyamangalam in Mysore, where Sri Vedanta Desika published the Srutaprakasika. It is said that the image was finally housed in the protected sanctuary of Tirupati, unfortunately after Pillai Lokacarya died of shock when he heard of the slaughter of his kith and kin at Srirangam.

The Muslim army occupied the temple precincts and put and an end to Hindu worship. A temple

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courtesan, who fascinated the invading general, prevailed upon him not to destroy the temple altogether, and restrict his vandalism to the destruction of a few cornices. The Brahmins in the surrounding areas tried to perform the sacred rituals whenever they could, but were harassed by the occupying Muslim forces constantly. The general was constantly attacked by disease as long as he remained in the temple, and so he moved to the nearby Poysalesvara temple, which he destroyed and erected a fortress at its place.

The tale of sack of Srirangam cannot be complete without the mention of the sacrifice of the temple courtesan. Unable to bear the harassment of the devotees by the Muslims, she enticed the Muslim chief, took him up a temple tower in the east, and in the pretext of showing him a famous icon from there, she pushed him down and killed him. Scared that she will be tortured by the Muslims as a result of her deed, she threw herself also down. According to tradition, to honor her memory, the funeral pyres of temple courtesans are lit by fire brought from the temple kitchen.

In 1371 C.E., the newly founded Hindu kingdom of Vijayanagar wrested back Srirangam from Muslim control, and re-installed the icon hidden at Tirupati with full ceremonies and processions.

1752-1758 C.E.- Depredations by the French:

During these 6 years, the temple was under the occupation of the French, who ruled from Pondicherry. They plundered the temple, and were planning on harassing the entire population that had taken refuge in the shrine, when an old Frenchman pleaded for mercy on behalf of the local inhabitants. Numerous accounts exist of the harassment of the inhabitants of the nearby areas by the occupying troops, including the molestation of women. The inner precincts of the temple were saved from desecration by 1000 Rajput soldiers of the army of Chanda Saheb.

1781 C.E.- The threat of another sack by Haider Ali:

Haider Ali was the Muslim ruler of Mysore, who invaded Srirangam in 1781, devastating territories en route. The inhabitants of the region sought refuge in the shrine, and locked themselves in, whereupon Haider Ali decided to destroy the temple altogether. However, his Brahmin officers intervened and averted the disaster.

1790 C.E.- The threat from Tippu Sultan:

Tippu, the son of Haider Ali, invaded the Carnatic in 1790 C.E. with his mammoth army, causing considerable havoc and destruction. He stationed his army in the temple for 6 days, and demanded 100000 gold pieces for his army from the temple authorities. The demand was refused, at which the Sultan turned wild. Fortunately however, Tippu had to flee for his own safety before he could wreak his vengeance upon the temple.

The instance below took place during the 'Carnatic Wars' (1743-1763) fought between the British and

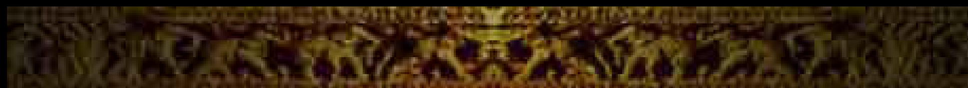
the French for the control of South India. Various Indian rulers also allied themselves along these two European rivals. In their mutual warfare, the Srirangam and the Jambukesvaram temples suffered a lot. Chanda Saheb allied with the French. Note that Chanda Saheb was the son in law of the Nawab of Arcot namely Dost Ali. He took advantage of a civil war at Tiruchirapalli and imprisoned the Hindu queen Minaksi (1732-36) of the town, establishing his own rule there. Stung by the indignities heaped upon her by Chanda Saheb's men, the queen took poison and died in 1736. During his rule (1736-1740), Chanda Saheb harassed the temple authorities a lot and extracted large amounts of money from them as tribute, till he was vanquished by the invading Maratha forces in 1740.

"Writing in his diary under date 30 May 1752, Ananda Ranga Pillai, the well known dubash and courtier of Dupleix (= the French Commander), states; 'Today I heard the following news. Of the troops at Srirangam with Chanda Saheb, M. Law, etc., only 300 troopers have received any pay for the last 6 months; the rest have no money to live on and have suffered much from the enemy's (= the British) blockade...They intended to have destroyed the Srirangam temple just as they destroyed the Jambukesvaram temple; but the temple people saved it for the present by giving them Rs. 60,000 and the grain stored there." (pg. 212)

When the British finally overcame the French, they invaded the Srirangam temple as well, but the 1000 Hindu Rajputs who worked for Chanda Saheb refused to allow the British to invade the temple and ruin its sanctity. Impressed by the bravery of the Rajputs, the British abandoned their attack on the Srirangam temple.

Reference:

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THE HINDU HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM

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Welcome to the Viraat Hindu Sabha's

Online Hindu Holocaust Memorial Museum

When we hear the word HOLOCAUST most of us think immediately of the Jewish people and their plight during the few years that Adolph Hitler held the world hostage. Today, with an increased awareness of minority rights, many of us are also aware of the Holocaust of the Native American peoples under the European invasion of the Americas. Many also remember the genocide of the Armenian peoples by the Turks. Even the huge loss of life and culture sustained by the indigenous Pagan peoples of Europe has become a well known fact. But no one ever seems to have even heard of the 1000 year long holocaust of Hindus, which continues today.

This site is dedicated to the many millions of Hindu lives lost, to the unbelievable loss of cultural and spiritual institutions, temples and burning of scriptures by Islamic and Christian invaders to Bharatvarsha (India) who even today, and with government sanction, seek to finally convert every last Hindu and prays for the complete extinction of the oldest religion known to mankind, Sanatana Dharma (Hinduism). We hope that this site will enlighten you to the truth which has for too long been ignored. Your comments and suggestions are always welcomed. Thank you for visiting.

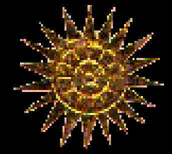
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SATYAMEVA JAYATE



THE GREEKS
ARAB INVASIONS
THE TURKS
THE MAMLUKS
THE KHILJIS
THE TUGHLAQS
THE SAYYIDS
THE BAHAMANIS
THE MUGHALS
THE PORTUGUESE
THE BRITISH

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW



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For more than two millennia, India has suffered one bloody invasion after another, leaving a Holocaust of millions of lives and a civilization and culture left in near ruins. Through it all, India is the only one of the great ancient civilizations that has survived today. Hinduism is the most ancient and only continuously surviving religion and culture that has successfully maintained itself while so many other cultures and civilizations have vanished. No other ancient civilization has retained its ancient religion and culture under the onslaught of the western Abrahamic monotheist religions.

The first of the major invasions came from Alexander of Macedonia. His invasion of India was intended to bring Greek culture to India and to encourage cultural exchange between the Indic and Hellenic worlds. This invasion was mild compared to the savage invasions of Islam, which continue even today, attempting to decimate the Indian religions of Dharma and the Culture of Bhaaratvarsha (India). The contemporary French writer Fran篩s Gautier has said, ***"The massacres perpetuated by Muslims in India are unparalleled in history, bigger than the Holocaust of the Jews by the Nazis; or the massacre of the Armenians by the Turks; more extensive even than the slaughter of the South American native populations by the invading Spanish and Portuguese."***

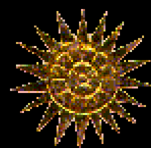
Just as India was about to successfully throw off the yoke of Islamic barbarism after nearly 1000 years of slaughter, the British and Portuguese came with their missionaries. They tried to finish what Islam had begun, beginning centuries more of colonial strangulation of the great Vedic Culture of India, until finally India won her Independence in 1947. By then, so much damage had been done that India was forced to accept partition along religious lines and give up much of her northern territories to what are today the Islamic States of Pakistan and Bangladesh.

What is left of modern India is still rife with a growing population of Muslims and the continuing threat of Christian missionaries, openly seeking to wipe out Hinduism, which is not only the majority religion of India, but more than that, the Indian way of life and her very culture. Here we present a brief overview of the history of the foreign invasions and occupations of India.

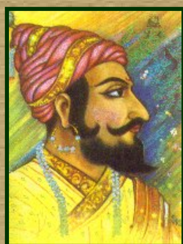
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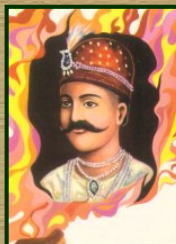
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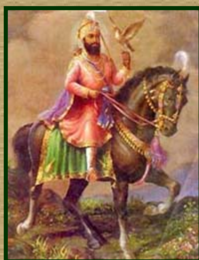
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B G TILAK
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RAMPRASAD BISMIL
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M S GOLWALKAR
VIR SAVARKAR
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SARDAR PATEL
CAMA SUKHDEV

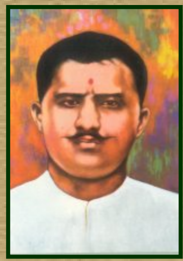

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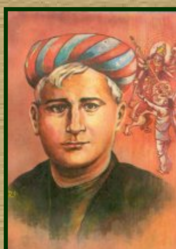

RANI LAXMIBHAI

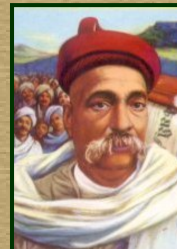

TATIA TOPE


RANA PRATAP


GURU GOBIND SINGH

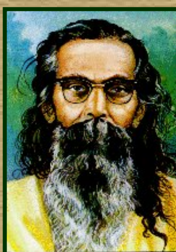

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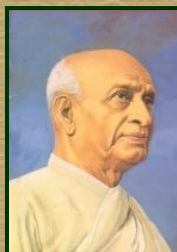

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B G TILAK

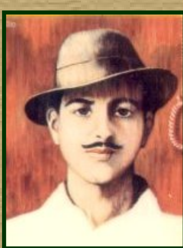

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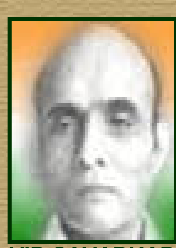

CAMA SUKHDEV


M. S. GOLWALKAR


SARDAR PATEL

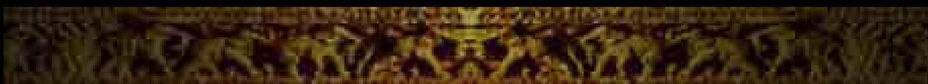

M K GANDHI

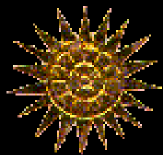

BHAGAT SINGH


VIR SAVARKAR

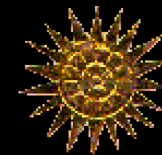

SUBHASH CHANDRA BOSE

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HALL OF SHAME
GHAZNI
GHORI
BABUR
FIRAZH TUGHLAQ
SHIHABUDDIN
ALLAUDDIN
AURANGAZEB
JAHANGIR
SHAH JAHAN
GENERAL DYER



There have been many villains throughout the history of the many invasions and occupations of India. And many of the worst of these despots and murderers are today considered by many to have been "great leaders" of India's past. In an effort to appease the Muslim minority, some of the worst of the butchers of the Hindu people have been turned into national heroes, and the true heroes and defenders of the Indian people have been all but forgotten. Here we offer brief biographies of those who invaded, occupied and butchered Hindus throughout India. Some may argue that these were great rulers who contributed great things to Indian civilization, but we must always remember that Adolf Hitler also brought great efficiency to German government and made the trains run on time as well.

HINDU KILLERS

Mahmud Ghazni
Mahmud Ghori
Firaz Shah Tughlaq
Shihabuddin
Aurangazeb
Babur
Jahangir
Shah Jahan
General Reginal Dyer

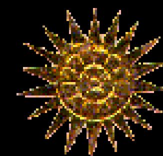


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MODERN MURDER



The Hindu Holocaust continues throughout the world today. More than any other religious group anywhere, Hindus and being persecuted and murdered by fanatical members of other religious groups, and even by the Government of India itself. In the supposedly "secular" country of India, we find that the minority religions are given special treatment and allowed to manage their own affairs. Muslims in India are offered a financial subsidy to pay for their religious pilgrimage to Mecca (the Hajj Subsidy), and Christian missionaries are allowed to run rampant using various forms of deception and material promises to convert entire villages, while the Hindu religion is denigrated in India's universities. Patriotic Hindus are called fundamentalists and fanatics, while Muslim and Christian terrorists carry out an unprecedented campaign of murder and violence against Hindus. Hindu temples are not allowed to be managed by the Hindus themselves, rather huge amounts of donations are collected by the "secular" government and pocketed by non-Hindu officials while the Temples are left to fall into ruins. At the same time, Muslim "Madrassas", or religious schools, are growing by leaps and bounds, and left free to preach their hatred against Hindus. Muslim and Christian separatists threaten to tear Mother India apart even more than she has already been in order to secede and carve out new nations from India based on religious governments, rather than on secular lines that insure religious freedom for all.



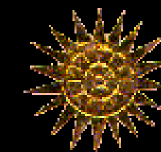


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MANTRA.COM HOLOCAUST MUSEUM	HINDU UNITY WEBSITE
AMERICAN HINDUS ON TERRORISM	VHP OFFICIAL WEBSITE
HINDU KUSH, HINDU SLAUGHTER	HVK OFFICIAL WEBSITE
HINDU HUMAN RIGHTS	HINDUISM TODAY WEBSITE
INDIA'S HOLOCAUST - HINDUISM TODAY	HINDU WORLD WIDE WEB
CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF HOLOCUAST	HINDU AWARENESS

WEBSITES ON HINDU HISTORY	HINDU GENOCIDE AROUND THE WORLD
ITIHAAS INDIAN HISTORY SITE	MAYERDAK - GENOCIDE IN BANGLADESH
COUNCIL ON INDIC TRADITIONS	HOMLAND BANGLADESH
HINDU HISTORY ON HINDUNET	GENOCIDE BEYOND THE HINDU KUSH
THE ISLAMIC INVADERS	GENOCIDE IN BANGLADESH 1971
INDIA AS AL-BERUNI SAW IT	HINDU GENOCIDE IN EAST PAKISTAN
CONCISE HISTORY OF INDIA	ISLAMIC TERRORISM IN SOUTH ASIA
SOUTH ASIAN HISTORY	LIBERATION WAR MUSEUM - BANGLADESH
THE MUSLIM INVASIONS - A HISTORY	
THE PORTUGUESE IN GOA	
THE LIBRARY OF HINDU HISTORY	
THE ISLAMIC ONSLAUGHT	
REWRITING INDIAN HISTORY	
DESTROYED IDOLS, KILLED WORSHIPERS	



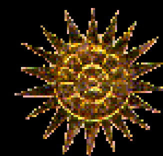
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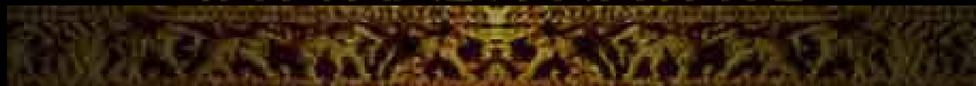
Welcome to the Viraat Hindu Sabha's

Online Hindu Holocaust Memorial Museum

When we hear the word HOLOCAUST most of us think immediately of the Jewish people and their plight during the few years that Adolph Hitler held the world hostage. Today, with an increased awareness of minority rights, many of us are also aware of the Holocaust of the Native American peoples under the European invasion of the Americas. Many also remember the genocide of the Armenian peoples by the Turks. Even the huge loss of life and culture sustained by the indigenous Pagan peoples of Europe has become a well known fact. But no one ever seems to have even heard of the 1000 year long holocaust of Hindus, which continues today.

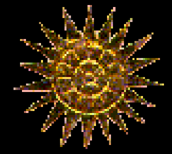
This site is dedicated to the many millions of Hindu lives lost, to the unbelievable loss of cultural and spiritual institutions, temples and burning of scriptures by Islamic and Christian invaders to Bharatvarsha (India) who even today, and with government sanction, seek to finally convert every last Hindu and prays for the complete extinction of the oldest religion known to mankind, Sanatana Dharma (Hinduism). We hope that this site will enlighten you to the truth which has for too long been ignored. Your comments and suggestions are always welcomed. Thank you for visiting.

SATYAMEVA JAYATE



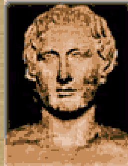


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THE GREEKS
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THE TURKS
THE MAMLUKS
THE KHILJIS
THE TUGHLAQS
THE SAYYIDS
THE BAHAMANIS
THE MUGHALS
THE PORTUGUESE
THE BRITISH

ALEXANDER AND THE GREEKS
336 B.C.E. - 323 B.C.E.



Alexander was the King of **Macedonia**, a nation north of the city-states of ancient **Greece**, which was heavily influenced by the Hellenic (Greek) culture. Alexander was just 21 years old in the year 336 B.C.E., when he decided to invade India, after having conquered much of Asia Minor and the Middle East. At the time, **King Taxiles** ruled a large area in India. When he heard that **Alexander** was coming, Taxiles did not wait, but went in person to meet him in peace. "Why should we make war on each other," Taxiles said, "if the reason for your coming is not to rob us of our water and our food? Those are the only things that a wise man has no choice but to fight for. As for any other riches or possessions, if I have more than you I am ready to share. But if fortune has been better to you than to me, then I have no objection to being in your debt."

These courteous words pleased Alexander, and he replied: "Do you think your kind words and courteous conduct will avoid a contest between us? No, I will not let you off so easily. I will do battle with you on these terms: no matter how much you give me, I will give more in return." Thereupon Taxiles made many fine presents to Alexander, but Alexander responded with presents of even greater value and topped them off with a thousand talents in gold coins. This generosity displeased Alexander's old friends but won the hearts of many of the Indians.



King Porus, however, refused to submit, and he took up a position to prevent Alexander from crossing the Hydaspes River. Porus was a huge man, and when mounted on his war elephant he looked in the same proportion as an ordinary man on a horse. After a long fight, Alexander won the victory, and Porus came to him as a prisoner. Alexander asked him how he expected to be treated, and Porus replied: "As a king." When Alexander asked a second time, Porus explained that in those words was included everything that a man could possibly want. Alexander not only allowed Porus to keep his kingdom as a satrap, but he also gave him more territory.

This was a costly victory, however. Many Macedonians died, and so did Alexander's old war horse, Bucephalus. This grieved Alexander so much that it seemed as though he had lost an old friend. On that spot he ordered a city to be built, named Bucephalia after his beloved horse, Bucephalus.

Such a difficult victory over only 22,000 Indians [May 326 B.C.] took the edge off the courage of the Macedonians. They had no enthusiasm for Alexander's proposed crossing of the Ganges, a river said

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to be four miles wide and six hundred feet deep, to encounter an army on the other side consisting of 200,000 infantry, 80,000 cavalry, 8,000 chariots, and 6,000 war elephants. Alexander was so angry at their reluctance that he shut himself up in his tent, saying that if they would not cross the Ganges, he owed them no thanks for anything they had done so far. But finally the persuasions of his friends, and the pleas of his soldiers, got Alexander to agree to turn back.

To exaggerate his reputation, Alexander left bridles and armor that were much bigger than normal, and huge altars to the gods. On a flotilla of rafts and barges, Alexander's army floated down the Indus River.

Along the way, they stopped to take some fortified cities, and at one of them Alexander came very close to losing his life. Alexander was the first one up the ladders onto the wall of the city of the Mallians, and then he jumped down into the town with only two of his guards behind him. Before the rest of the Macedonians could catch up and save him, Alexander had taken an arrow in the ribs and had been knocked dizzy by a club. He was unconscious when they carried him away, and he fainted when the doctors cut out the arrow. Rumors spread that Alexander was dead.

While in India, Alexander took ten of the Brahmins prisoner. These men had a great reputation for intelligence, so Alexander decided to give them a test. He announced that the one who gave the worst answer would be the first to die, and he made the oldest Brahmin the judge of the competition.

Which are more numerous, Alexander asked the first one, the living or the dead? "The living," said the Brahmin, "because the dead no longer count."

Which produces more creatures, the sea or the land? Alexander asked the second. "The land," was his answer, "because the sea is only a part of it."

The third was asked which animal was the smartest of all, and the Brahmin replied: "The one we have not found yet."

Alexander asked the fourth what argument he had used to stir up the Indians to fight, and he answered: "Only that one should either live nobly or die nobly."

Which is older: day or night? was Alexander's question to the fifth, and the answer he got was: "Day is older, by one day at least." When he saw that Alexander was not satisfied with this answer, the Brahmin added: "Strange questions get strange answers."

What should a man do to make himself loved? asked Alexander, and the sixth Brahmin replied: "Be powerful without being frightening."

What does a man have to do to become a god? he asked the seventh, who responded: "Do what is impossible for a man."

The question to the eighth was whether death or life was stronger, and his answer: "Life is stronger than death, because it bears so many miseries."

The ninth Brahmin was asked how long it was proper for a man to live, and he said: "Until it seems better to die."

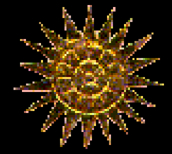
Then Alexander turned to the judge, who decided that each one had answered worse than another. "You will die first, then, for giving such a decision," said Alexander. "Not so, mighty king," said the Brahmin, "if you want to remain a man of your word. You said that you would kill first the one who made the worst answer." Alexander gave all of the Brahmins presents and set them free, even though they had persuaded the Indians to fight him.

Alexander's voyage down the Indus took seven months. When he finally arrived at the Indian Ocean, he decided not to take the army home by ship but to march them through the Gedrosian Desert. After sixty miserable days, they arrived at Gedrosia, where they finally found enough to eat and drink. Many died in that desert: out of the 120,000 infantry and 15,000 cavalry that Alexander took with him into India, only one in four came back.

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THE ARAB INVASIONS
636 C.E. - 850 C.E.

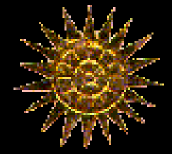
In one of the Hadiths (Muslim scripture) the **Prophet Muhammad** is quoted as saying ***"Two groups of my Ummah Allah has protected from the hellfire: a group that will conquer India and a group that will be with Isa ibnu Maryam (Jesus, son of Mary)."*** The first attempted invasion of India by Muslims occurred in 636 CE -- under Caliph Umar, within four years of Muhammad's death. The first 16 invasion attempts utterly failed. But the 17th attempt to invade India by **Muhammad bin Q•m**, which was carried out against the wishes of the Kalifate, was successful. Muhammad bin Q•m marched to **Sindh** with 15,000 men. He arrived at Debal, a port city near the modern Karachi, in 711. There he was bolstered by the arrival of his artillery by sea, and took the town. This was followed by his conquest of Alor, located north of Hyderabad in June 712. In the fighting before **Aror the Raja D•r** was slain. The next year he also conquered the important city of Multan.

Following the rapid conquest of Sindh, Arab progress was checked. In part this was caused by internal division. In 714 Hajj•died, and in 715 the **Calif Walid I** (705-715) took interest in the campaign and recalled the conquering general, Muhammad bi Q•m. Arab control thereafter rapidly disintegrated, leading many local rulers to repudiate their allegiance to the Arabs. The Arabs also met stiff resistance from neighboring Indian kings. When an Arab governor of Sindh, Junaid, sought to seize Kacch and Malwa, he was foiled by the Pratihara and Gurjara kings. The Arabs were thus unable to expand beyond Sindh, but they were able to maintain their hold on the province. in 985 an **Ismaili Fatamid** dynasty declared its independence in Multan.

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THE TURKISH INVASION
1000 C.E. - 1206 C.E.

The break-up of the **Gurjara-Pratihara** empire led to a phase of **political uncertainty** in north India. As a result, little attention was paid to the emergence of the **aggressive** and **expansionist Turks** from north-west.



Rajputana States
The three most important of the Rajput states in north India were the **Gahrwals** of Kanauj, the **Paramaras** of Malwa and the **Chauhans** of Ajmer.

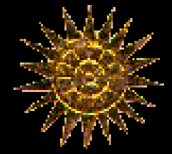
There were **other smaller dynasties** in different parts of the country, such as the **Kalachuris** in the area around Jabalpur, the **Chandellas** in Bundelkhand, the **Chalukyas** of Gujarat, the **Tomars** of Delhi, etc. Bengal remained under the control of the **Palas** and later, the **Senas**.

There was a **continuous struggle** and warfare between the various Rajput states. It was these rivalries which made it impossible for the Rajput rulers to join hands to oust the **Ghaznavids** from the Punjab. In fact, the Ghaznavids felt strong enough to make raids even up to Ujjain.

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THE MAMLUK (SLAVE) DYNASTY
1206 C.E. - 1290 C.E



A Mamluk Soldier

Ghuri's conquest became the nucleus of a new political entity of India - the **Delhi Sultanate**. For almost one hundred years after that, the Delhi Sultanate was involved in foreign invasions, internal conflicts among the Turkish leaders and the dispossessed Rajput rulers and chiefs to regain their independence.

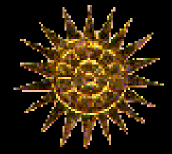
Ghuri left his Indian possessions in the care of his former slave, General **Qutb-ud- din Aibak**. He played an important part in the expansion of the Turkish sultanate in India after the **battle of Tarrain**.

On the death of his master, Aibak **severed his links** with **Ghazni** and asserted his independence, and founded **Slave Dynasty** (mamluks). This helped to prevent India being drawn into central asian politics and enabled the Delhi Sultanate to **develop independently**.

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HISTORICAL OVERVIEW



The Khiljis
1290 C.E. - 1320 C.E.

The Khiljis used their **Afghan descent** to win the loyalties of the discontented nobles, who felt that they had been neglected by earlier Slave sultans.

Jalaluddin Khilji (1290 AD - 1296 AD) tried to mitigate some of the harsh aspects of Balban's rule. He was the first ruler to put forward the view that the state should be based on the **willing support of the governed** and that since the majority of Indians were Hindus, the state cannot be truly Islamic.

Alauddin Khilji (1296 AD - 1316 AD) treacherously murdered his uncle and father-in-law, Jalaluddin. By harsh methods, he cowed down the nobles and made them completely subservient to the crown. He was ambitious and dreamt of an **all India empire**.

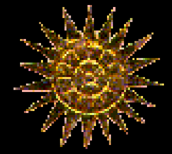


Over a twenty five years period, Malwa, Gujarat and Rajasthan was brought under his control. To solve the **water problems** in summer, he constructed lot of **Baolis** (Wells). His famous general **Malik Kafur** led the campaign (1308 AD - 1312 AD) to the south and **defeated** the **Yadavas** of Deogiri, the **Kakityas** of Warangal and the **Hoysalas** of Dwarasamudra.

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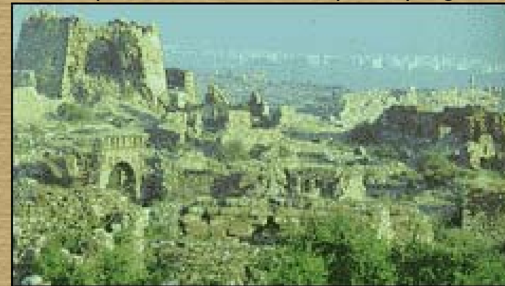
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The Tughlaqs
1320 C.E. - 1412 C. E.

The **Tughlaqs** also wished to rule the whole of India. **Ghyasuddin's** (1320 AD - 1325 AD) campaign to Warrangal, Orissa and Bengal were directed towards this end. He built the city **Tughlaqabad** near Delhi.



By 1324 AD, the territories of the **Delhi sultanate** reached upto Madurai. However, his economic policy was not consistent with his political ambitions. As the **Iqta holders** were permitted their earlier perquisites, power gradually slipped back into the hands of **nobles.**

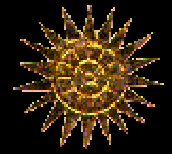
Muhammad-Bin-Tughlaq (1325 AD - 1351 AD) succeeded his father and was referred to as an **ill-starred idealist**, whose experiments generally ended in failure. He extended the kingdom beyond India, into **Central Asia**.

To meet the the **expenses** of the large army Muhammad **increased the tax** but the peasants **refused and rebelled**. Though the rebellion was suppressed, the taxation policy had to be revised. He decided to issue **token coins** in brass and copper which had the same value as silver coins. But due to the absence of a central mint, people began to **forge** the new coins, and the token coins had to be discontinued.

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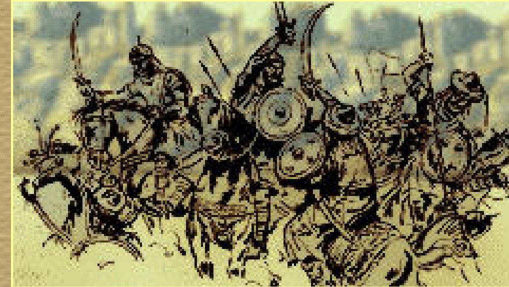




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THE SAYYID & LODHI DYNASTIES
1414 C.E. 1526 C.E.

The **Tughlaq dynasty** ended soon after the **Timurs** invasion but the sultanate survived, though it was merely a shadow of its former self. Timurs nominee captured Delhi and was proclaimed the new sultan and the first of **Sayyid Dynasty** (1414 AD - 1451 AD), which was to rule the earlier half of the fifteenth century.



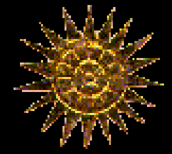
Their rule was short-lived and confined to a radius of some 200 miles around Delhi. They kept the machinery going until a more capable dynasty, the **Lodhis**, took over. The Lodhis were of **pure Afghan** origin, and brought an **eclipses** to the **Turkish nobility**

Bahlul Lodhi established himself in Punjab after the Timur's invasion. The most important Lodhi Sultan was **Sikandar Lodhi** (1489 - 1517), who controlled the Ganga Valley as far as Bengal. He **moved his capital from Delhi**, to be able to control the kingdom better, to a new town which later become famous as the city of **Agra**.

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The Bahamanis

1346C.E. - 1689 C.E.

The **Bahamani kingdom** was founded by **Hasan Gangu**, who led a rebellion against Sultan **Muhammad- Bin-Tughlaq** and proclaimed the independence of the Bahamani kingdom (1346 AD).

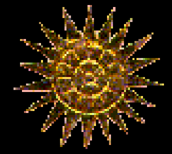


He took the title of **Bahaman Shah** and became the first ruler of the dynasty. This kingdom included the whole of the northern Deccan upto the river Krishna. South of the kingdom was the **Vijayanagara Empire** with which it had to fight continueous wars for various reasons.

The most remarkable figure in the Bahamani kingdom was **Firuz Shah Bahamani** (1397 AD - 1422 AD), who fought three major battles with the Vijayanagara Empire without any major result. He was well acquainted with religious and natural sciences. He wanted to make the Deccan the cultural centre of India.

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The Mughals
1526 C.E. - 1857 C.E.

The **Mughal period** can be called a second **classical age** in northern India. In this cultural development, the Indian traditions were **amalgamated** with the **Turko-Iranian culture**, brought to the country by the Mughals.

The Mughal rulers of India kept up the closest of contacts with Iran and there was a stream of scholars and artists coming over the frontiers to seek fame and fortune at the brilliant court of the Great Mughal, **Babar**.



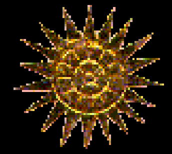
Babar (1526 AD - 1530 AD)
Babar founder of the Mughal dynasty, was the king of Kabul. He was invited to India to fight against **Ibrahim Lodhi**. He confronted and defeated Lodhi in 1526 at the **first battle of Panipat**. Babar was the first king to bring **artillery** to India and succeeded because the cavalry that he had brought from central Asia, which was new to the Indian army, and the fact that he was a good general, with an easily moved army.

Before his death, he had made himself the master of the Punjab, Delhi and the Ganga plains as far as Bihar. He wrote **Tuzuk-i-Babari** an autobiography, containing a lively description of India, in Turkish.

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HISTORICAL OVERVIEW



THE PORTUGUESE

India's connection with the **west** has predominantly been related to **trade**. Amongst the **modern Europeans**, the **Portuguese** were the first to establish themselves in India and the last of the Europeans to leave. They arrived as early as 1498 via the ocean route discovered by **Vasco-da-Gama**.



He was the first discoverer of sea route via **Cape of Good Hope** to India, when **Constantinople** came under Arab power. Portuguese left behind **Roman Catholic Christianity** with its Baroque churches, its musical liturgy and its great monastic order committed to education.

What happened to India when the Portuguese arrived?

European interest in India has persisted since classical times and for very cogent reasons. Europe had much to steal from India such as spices, textiles and other oriental products. The best classical accounts are in fact the commercial ones. When direct contact was lost with the fall of Rome and the rise of the Muslims, the trade was carried on through middlemen. In the late Middle Ages it increased with the increasing prosperity of Europe. It should be remembered that the spice trade was not solely a luxury trade at that time. Spices were needed to preserve meat through the winter (cattle had to be slaughtered in late autumn through lack of winter fodder) and to combat the taste of decay. Wine, in the absence of ancient or modern methods of maturing, had to be 'mulled' with spices. This trade suffered two threats in the later Middle Ages. There was the threat of Mongol and Turkish invasion which interfered with the land routes and threatened to engulf the sea route through Egypt, and there was the threat of monopoly shared between the Venetians and Egyptians.

In 1510 Affonso de Albuquerque captured the island of Goa on the west coast of India from the Sultan of Bijapur and made it the capital of the Portuguese eastern empire. Its strong points besides Goa were Socotra off the Red Sea (he could not take Aden), Ormuz in the Persian Gulf, Diu in Gujrat, Malacca, the entrepot for the Far East and the spice trade in the East Indies, and Macao in China. The function of Goa was to supervise Malabar, to control the pilgrim traffic to Mecca as well as the general trade to Egypt, Iraq and

Persia, and of Malacca to control the East Indian spices at their source.

However, the Portuguese irked some of the Mughal and preceding rulers because of the toll they took of the trade from the port of Surat and the pilgrim traffic. In seizing and retaining their strong points they acquired a reputation for cruelty and peridy because their practice on both these points was below the current Indian standard. They were deeply impregnated with the idea that no faith need be kept with an infidel. It was from this period that the word feringi (lit.farangi, frank) acquired the opprobrium of which echoes may still be heard today. However, the Mughal Emperor, Jahangir admired their pictures and had them copied. Emperor Akbar listened with interest to Jesuit Father's discourses. The New Testament was translated into Persian.

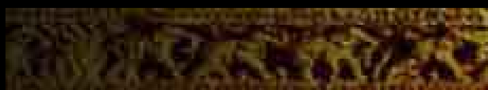
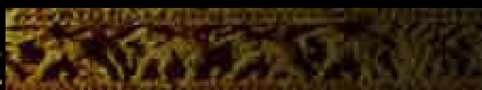
However, during the whole of the 16th century the Portuguese disputed with the Muslims the supremacy of the Indian seas, and the antagonism between Christianity and Islam became gradually more intense. In 1519, Ferdinand Magellan, a Portuguese navigator commanded the first expedition to sail around the world. In the Collins Encyclopaedia it is written that Magellan set sail to check the power of Muslim navy and fleet that was dominant. In 1560, the Portuguese being intolerant in religion, introduced the Inquisition with all its horrors. This was regarded as sub-standard from the Indian standpoint, advertising this trait in their rough handling of Syrian Christians of Malabar to secure their submission to the Catholic faith.

Socially the policy of Albuquerque in encouraging mixed marriages had important results. His object was to rear a population possessing Portuguese blood and imbued with Portuguese Catholic culture who would be committed by race and taste to the Portuguese settlements and so form a permanent self-perpetuating garrison. The result was the race long known as Luso-Indians and now as Goansese or Goans. They are mainly Indian in blood, Catholic in religion, and partially western in outlook. In recent times, they have spread all over India as traders and professionals, a less successful version of the Parsis. (Of all the Asians in Britain, a majority of whom are Muslim, the first Asian MP had to be a Roman Catholic of Goanese descent, Keith Vaz).

Some Portuguese words have even crept into the Urdu language such as the names of items for furniture (mayze for desk, almaari for cupboard/wardrobe). Also vindaloo (curry) is part Portuguese and part Urdu: vian is Portuguese for meat and aloo is the Urdu for

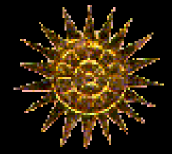
potato - thus we have meat and potato curry.

The Portuguese were soon followed by European rivals like the French, Dutch and British. Rivalry between the Dutch and English resulted in the Dutch East India Company "winning" Southeast Asia and Indonesia (known to Europeans as the East Indies); and the British East India Company having to settle for "second-best", that is India.


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THE GREEKS
ARAB INVASIONS
THE TURKS
THE MAMLUKS
THE KHILJIS
THE TUGHLAQS
THE SAYYIDS
THE BAHAMANIS
THE MUGHALS
THE PORTUGUESE
THE BRITISH

The British East India Company

The East India Company chartered by the **British crown** and ultimately responsible to the parliament, launched British rule in India. The British East India Company was established under a Royal Charter of **Queen Elizabeth I** for 15 years for **spice trading** on 31st December 1600 AD with the capital of £70,000.

By the middle of the eighteenth century, the company succeeded in **establishing power** in Bengal, Bihar, Orissa and the east coast. After the **battle of Plassey**, in 1757, they secured permission from the **Mughals** to collect land revenue from these provinces in return for an annual tribute and maintaining of order and peace.

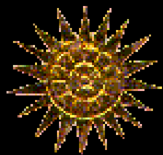


They collected the land revenues through the **local Nawab** and took control of his army. This gave them **power without responsibility**. The Company took **control of Mysore** by defeating **Tipu Sultan** in 1792 and the **Marathas** were finally defeated in 1817 AD - 1819 AD. Further the company expanded its rule by defeating **Nepal** in 1814-16, **Sind** in 1843, **Punjab** in 1848-49 and **Burma** in 1886.

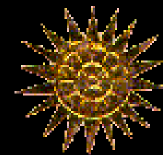
The cruel management of the company ultimately lead to the **mutiny of 1857**, after which its rule over India ended and the **British Crown** officially took over the administration in 1858.

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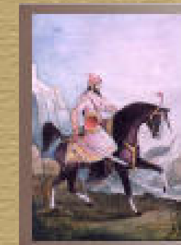
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CHHATRAPATI SHIVAJI

He founded the Hindu kingdom in the Deccan against all odds, fighting against the mighty Mughals. He inspired and united the common man to fight against the tyranny of Mughal ruler Aurangzeb, by inculcating a sense of pride and nationality in them. At the age of 16, he took a pledge to establish a sovereign Hindu state. His life appears like a fairy tale to children. He clearly outstands all the rulers and generals of India by the exemplary life he lived and is thus respected by the entire cross section of Indians. Shivaji is to India what Napolean was to Europe.

He raised a strong army and navy, constructed and repaired forts, used guerilla warfare tactics, developed a strong intelligence network, gave equal treatment to the people from all religions and castes based on merit, and functioned like a seasoned Statesman and General. He appointed ministers with specific functions such as Internal security, Foreign affairs, Finance, Law and Justice, Religious matters, Defense etc. He introduced systems in revenue collection and warned the officials against harassment of subjects. He thought ahead of times and was a true visionary. In his private life, his moral virtues were exceptionally high. His thoughts and deeds were inspired by the teachings of his mother Jijabai, teacher Dadaji Konddev, great saints like Dnyaneshwar & Tukaram and the valiancy and ideals of the Lords Rama and Krishna.

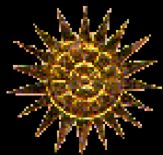


The tiny kingdom established by Chhatrapati Shivaji known as "Hindavi Swaraja" (Sovereign Hindu state) grew and spread beyond Attock in Northwest India (now in Pakistan) and beyond Cuttack in East India in course of time, to become the strongest power in India. The Peshwas (Pune), Shindes Gwalior, Gaekwads (Baroda) & Holkars (Indore) contributed to its growth. The history of India is incomplete without the history of Marathas and Shivaji is the nucleus of Maratha history. Shivaji has been a source of inspiration and pride and will continue to inspire generations in future.

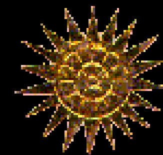
To read more about this great hero, click HERE.

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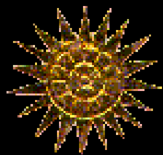
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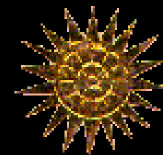




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Maharana Pratap was a great Rajput King. The Rajputs are a brave and a chivalrous race who were feudal kings in ancient India before the Mughals came. They were the first to resist the Mughal invaders and many wars were fought between the Rajputs and the Mughals. Though the Mughals captured the north of India they were unsuccessful in capturing central India where they faced tough opposition from the Rajput kings there.

Akbar wanted to control the whole of India and used a mix of tolerance, generosity, and force to over come the Rajput kings. One of the most gallant Rajput kings was Rana Pratap who did not want to give up his kingdom to the Mughals.

Rana Pratap was the Grandson of Raja Udai Singh (Udaipur is named after him), the king of Chittod.

Rana Pratap led the Rajputs against the army of Akbar to preserve the independence of Mewar. Rana Pratap not only had to face the mighty Mughals but also had to fight against other Rajput kings(Raja Todar Mal and Raja Man Singh) who aligned with the Mughals.

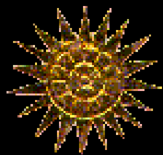
In the Battle of Haldighati(1576) fought between Maharana Pratap and the Mughals; the Rajputs were not able to overcome the combined strength of the Mughals and the renegade Rajput princes who had played the role of traitors. Maharana Pratap was badly hurt in the battle and was saved by his wise horse Chetak, who took him in an unconscious state away from the battle scene.

Rana Pratap died in 1597 when his son Amar Singh took over the kingdom.

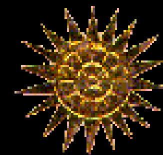
Although Maharana Pratap was not able to thwart the Muslims successfully, the saga of Rajput resistance to Muslim rule continued till the 17th century when the baton of the struggle for Indian Independence from Mughals was taken up by the upcoming power of the Marathas, who brought about an end to Muslim domination of India.



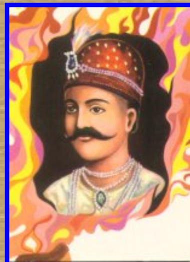
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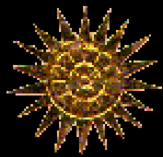
TATIA TOPE was a hero of the fight for freedom in 1857. His very name made the mighty English generals tremble. Deceived by his friend, he faced death like a hero, for the sake of his country. The British troops had pitched their tents on the parade grounds near the fort of Shivpuri, 75 miles from Gwalior. The day was April 18, 1859. It was 4 o'clock in the afternoon. A smiling, charming prisoner was brought out of the prison.

His hands and feet were chained. Under guard he was taken to the hangman's post. He had been condemned to death. The prisoner stepped towards the post fearlessly. There was no hesitation as he stepped upon the platform. It was the custom to cover the eyes of the condemned man with a scarf. When soldiers stepped forward with the scarf, he smiled and made signs to say, 'I don't need all this.' Nor did he allow the hands and feet to be bound. He himself put the noose around his neck. The rope was tightened. Then, at last, there was a pull....
In a moment it was all over.

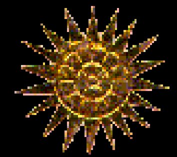
It was a heart-rending scene, which moved the whole country to tears. The man who was hanging lifeless on the gallows of the English was no criminal. He was not a thief, nor was he a cutthroat. He was the Supreme commander in the War of Indian Independence, which in 1857, had challenged the hold of the British over India. It was he who, more than anybody else, shook the mighty British Empire to its foundations. Holding aloft the flag of freedom, he sought to break the chains of slavery and fought the military might of the English heroically. His name was Tatia Tope, a household word for bravery.



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GURU GOBIND SINGH JI. He is one of the most radiant stars in the galaxy of religious leaders. Time cannot wither nor stale the luster of the sacrifices that he made for the cause of religious freedom. His transformation of senile and sloppy mentality of degraded and demoralized Hindu society of that time into militant and challenging fervor is a landmark in our history. It can be said, throughout the annals of history there was no other individual who could be a more inspiring personality than Guru Gobind Singh's. But mankind has yet to know and appreciate and understand the height of his spiritual ideals and his own practical adherence to their dictates and the way in which they sprouted and blossomed in the hearts of his followers.

A study of his life and personality and all that he achieved in a span of forty two years that he lived, confirms that he has become a most eloquent symbol of all that is virile and positive in our religious traditions.

Govind was born at Patna (Bihar) in the year 1666 and was assassinated at Nandar (Deccan) in the year 1708 A.D. He was hardly nine years of age when Guru Tegh Bahadur was martyred at Delhi. Guru Gobind Singh then assumed the Spiritual suzerainty and became Guru. He soon trained himself for fulfillment of his duties both in spiritual and temporal sense. He became a great poet, a mystic scholar, a fine soldier, a tactical General, and an astute politician. He was soon able to consolidate the Sikhs into a body of brave fighting people with common loyalty and common purpose. As he has his life's mission:-

> ***"Extend the region of righteousness on earth seize and destroy the evil and the sinful"***

It reached a culmination point in 1699 when Guru originated baptism-Nectar-Amrit ceremony for the saint soldiers. They stood liberated, this information was verily a psychological miracle. Low born and untouchables shed their inborn and innate repression. The outstanding example of Guru Gobind Singh's power to make the sparrow to hunt the hawk and one man fight a legion was the sovereign tested truth after the baptism. These liberated souls were Guru's Khalsa - Guru in his tribute to the Khalsa records..

> ***"All the battles I have won against tyranny I have fought with the devoted backing of these people."***

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All baptized Sikhs must wear the five symbols which are bestowed on them - the five "K's" KESH, KANGA, KARA, KIRPAN, KACHCHA - namely unshorn hair, a comb, a steel bangle, a sword and short underwear.

This uniform of unshorn hair and bearded appearance enjoined by the Guru for the baptized disciples was a bold step as one to feel that he has emerged from larval skin leaving behind chrysalis of a dead past. Guru Gobind Singh thus built on foundations so nobly laid by his predecessors an enduring nationality. He infused new enthusiasm for freedom, democracy, righteousness and self sacrifice in to the minds of vanquished people suppressed under the killing weight of Mughal despotism. He kindled an unextinguished passion for brave deeds in love of God and down trodden which made the Sikhs a distinct people a model of inspiration for all times.

In performance of divine mission his two sons were lost fighting the Mughal hordes while other two were bricked alive at Sirhind under orders of a Mughal Governor. Guru Gobind Singh retained equanimity in all circumstances whether he was at Anandpur riding his blue steed, with regal plume or in desert of Machivara barefoot and forlorn his heart was in constant harmony with the Supreme Being.

All the battles Guru fought had no personal ambitious or territorial aim. They depict man's inner struggle against tyrannies, religious, social and otherwise. They vividly portray that spirit ultimately triumphs against all impediments. His life's emblem of sacrifice, represents the price spirit has to offer to redeem freedom.

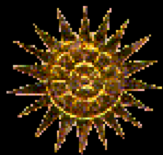
The other great thing in the career of Guru Gobind Singh is his self effacement in the domain of spiritual leadership. He abolished the office of earthly guru. He declared Guru Granth was to act as GURU henceforth and it will act as supreme leader and teacher while his personality will amalgamate with Khalsa.

Khalsa mera Roop-e-Khas Khalsa me ho Karu Nivas

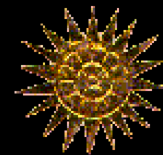
Khalsa represents my facial appearance and I indwell with them

Thus he achieved his mission of life.

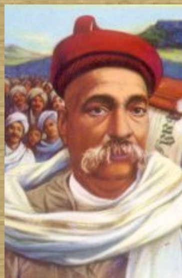




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Bal Gangadhar Tilak was a great Sanskrit scholar and astronomer. He fixed the origin and date of Rigvedic Aryans, which was highly acclaimed and universally accepted by orientalists of his time. His role in Congress and advocating Home Rule for India were enormous. His newspaper (Kesari) founded in 1881 is going strong even today. He was Guru to V.D. Savarkar and hundreds of nationalists and thousands of Indians. He led the Indian Freedom Movement, till 1920, his death. After him Gandhiji took over. Although Gandhi accepted Gokhale as his mentor, in practice, he adopted all of Tilak's ideas of Swadeshi and of social reform.

His words, "Swaraj is my birthright and I shall have it!" roused a sleeping nation to action, making Indian people aware of their political plight under a foreign rule. Tilak did not question the British Sovereignty nor his demands were rebellious or revolutionary. All he was asking was favorable conditions in India, to enable people to learn to govern themselves. May be all over the world, the separatist forces should follow his vision and define freedom as ability to govern one's land. But the handful rulers who ruled India's millions thought otherwise. They thought that Tilak was whipping a rebellion and he was imprisoned twice; two years for the first and six during the second. They said, he had committed treason.

Born in Ratnagiri, a small coastal town in 1856 in a middle class family, Tilak had to feed himself for college education. At an early age he was convinced that the educational system the British provided for the Indians was not at all adequate. After graduation and a law degree, he helped found a school which laid emphasis on nationalism. He started a news paper 'Kesari' which tried to teach Indians of their glorious past and reminded them to be self reliant (Swadeshi).

Tilak rightly calculated the attitude of the British towards the economic exploitation of the Indians. The British used the raw material from the Indian soil and produced finished products in their country, which in turn were sold in India. This made the Indians totally dependent on the British. In the process, all the self-employing industries of India like spinning, weaving, glass making, sugar , dyeing, paper making were destroyed. People became destitute for no fault of theirs to help an empire become richer and stronger.To fight this situation, he gave four mantras called Chatuhsutri: (1). Boycott of foreign goods (2) National Education (3) Self Government (4) Swadeshi or self reliance. He realized that mere protest against British rule was not going to help and insisted on native production and reliance.

He founded Deccan Education Society to give better education as per the country's needs. He wrote articles over inhuman punishment meted out to the nationalist youth who protested the division of Bengal (VangaBhanga). Indian newspapers were not to criticize the British policy in those days and two articles titled "Has the Government lost its head ?" .and "To Rule is not to wreak vengeance" appearing in Kesari landed him in jail, after a namesake trial. For the first time in

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British history, intellectuals in England (including the great orientalist, Max Muller) were able to convince the Government that the trial was unfair. But the second time (1908) was no different. Tilak advocated his own case and when the judgment of six years of black-waters (kala pani) imprisonment was pronounced, he gave the famous statement :

" All I wish to say is that in spite of the verdict of the jury, I maintain my innocence. There are higher powers that rule the destiny of men and nations. It may be the will of Providence that the cause I represent may prosper by suffering than by remaining free".

His trial and punishment led to national upheaval. But the British were careful enough to arrange everything in secret and the judgment was delivered at midnight and Tilak was taken under military vigil to be deported to Burma (present Myanmar, which was also under British control).

At 52, Tilak wrote his famous commentary on Bhagavad-Gita, the sacred book of Hindus; Geeta-Rahasya in the jail. By the time Tilak completed his six year prison term, he was the unquestioned leader of the Indians - the uncrowned king. He was known as the Tilak Maharaj.

There was unprecedented jubilation after Tilak was free and back in India. Civil resistance, the concept of Swaraj, and nationalism had taken deep roots. Tilak's suffering did not go in vain. A band of leaders, full of zeal for nationalism and self-sacrifice was coming up. National schools were coming up in all corners of India. He paved the way for Khadi (hand woven cloth), picketing against foreign goods and alcoholism. His death in 1920 brought Mahatma Gandhi on the scene and Gandhiji gave a concrete shape to Tilak's ideas of Swadeshi.

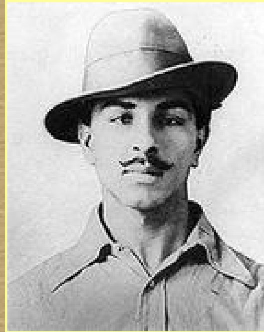




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Bhagat Singh was born in September 27, 1907 in the village Banga of Layalpur to Mata Vidyavati and Sardar Kishan Singh. Bhagat Singh grew up in a patriotic atmosphere as his father and uncle, were great freedom fighters and were put in jail many times by the British.

Bhagat Singh grew up at a time when the Freedom struggle was all around him. Since his young age he wondered why so many Indians could not get freedom from a few British invaders, he dreamed of a free India. The massacre at Jallianwala Bagh on April 13, 1919 drove him to go to Amritsar, where he kissed the earth and brought back home a little of the blood soaked soil, he was just 12 years old then. Kartar Sing Sarabha, hanged at the age of 19 by the British was Bhagat Singh's hero.

Bhagat Singh, along with the help of Chandrashekhar Azad, formed the Hindustan Socialist Republican Army (HSRA). The aim of this Indian revolutionary movement was defined as not only to make India independent, but also to create "a socialist India."

In February 1928, a committee from England visited India. It came to be known as the Simon Commission. The purpose of its visit was to decide how much freedom and responsibility could be given to the people of India. Indian freedom fighters started an agitation called "Simon go back". It was in this agitation that during a police lathicharge, Lala Lajpat Rai was hurt and died. To avenge the death of Lala Lajpat rai, Bhagat Singh and Rajguru shot and killed the British Officer who had hit Lala Lajpat Rai.

In April 1929, the Central Legislative Assembly met in Delhi. The British Government wanted to place before the Assembly two bills which were likely to harm the country's interests. Even if the Assembly rejected them, the Viceroy could use his special powers and approve them, and they would become laws. Bhagat Singh and Batukeshwar Dutt planned to throw a bomb in the Legislative Assembly and, get arrested. On 8th of April 1929 this is what they exactly did. The idea of the attack was not to kill anyone but to create awareness about India's freedom struggle. They were arrested after this attack.

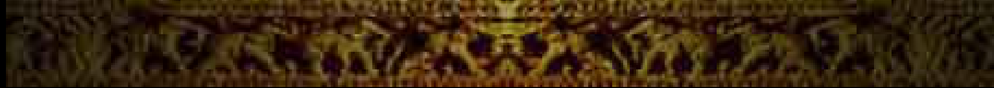
In their trial Bhagat Singh and Batukeshwar Dutt stated, **"If the deaf are to hear, the sound has to be very loud. When we dropped the bomb, it was not our intention to kill anybody. We have bombed the British Government. The British must quit India and make her free."**

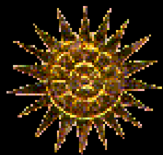
In the trial it was decided that Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev and Rajguru were to be hanged for all their anti British activities. On 24th of March 1931 Bhagat Singh walked upto the hanging rope kissed it

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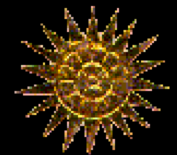
and put it around his neck to be hanged.

Bhagat Singh became "Shaheed Bhagat Singh" or Martyr at the age of 24. The stories of his courage and patriotism became an inspiration for many youth at that time who wanted to see India independent. Even today Shaheed Bhagat Singh's memory continues to inspire the youth and many poems and songs have been written about his courage and undying patriotism.





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Ramprasad Bismil was a brave revolutionary who gave up his life smilingly for the sake of the Motherland. He was persecuted by an enraged foreign government, hunted by the police and betrayed by follow workers. And yet he lit the fire of revolution to burn down the slavery. He was the brave leader of the Kakori Rail Dacoity episode. His poetry is also a lamp lighted at the altar of the Mother land.
Kakori is a village near Lucknow. It became famous, because the attack on the train took place near by.

It was the evening of the 9th of August 1925; the number eight down train was passing near Kakori. Ramaprasad and his nine revolutionary followers pulled the chain and stopped it. They looted the money belonging to the government, deposited in the Guard's carriage. Excepting that one passenger was killed by an accidental shot, there was no bloodshed.

This extremely well planned dacoity jolted the government. After a month of detailed preliminary inquiries and elaborate preparations the government cast its net wide for the revolutionaries. Arrest warrants were issued not only against the ten participants but also against other leaders of the Hindusthan Republican Association. With the lone exception of Chandrashekhar Azad, all participants were caught.

The case went on for over a year and a half, Ramaprasad, Ashfaqullah Roshan Singh and Rajendra Lahiri all four were sentenced to death, A strong campaign was organized throughout India to save the lives of these revolutionary heroes. All the leaders of public life appealed to the British Government to show mercy to the condemned men. But the Government was unyielding.

It was the 18th of December 1927. A middle-aged lady was waiting at the main gates of the Gorakhpur Central Jail. Her face was radiant but anxiety was writ large on it. She was eagerly waiting to be called into the prison.

By that time her husband also arrived there. He was surprised that his wife was there before him. He also sat down to wait for the call.

Another young man came there. He was not related to them. He knew that the couple would be permitted to enter the prison.But how could he manage to enter? This was his problem.

The officials of the prison called in the husband and the wife. The young man followed them. The guard stopped him and rudely asked, "Who are you?"

"Permit him also, brother. He is my sister's son", the lady said in an entreating voice.
The guard relented.

All the three entered the prison to visit a freedom fighter that was to face his death on the morrow. The freedom fighter was brought there in chains. They were like ornaments on him. This was the last time that he could see his mother, the last time he could address her as 'Mother'. At this thought grief welled up in him. He stood speechless and tears rolled down his cheeks.

In a firm voice the mother said, 'What is this, my son? I had thought of my son as a great hero. I was thinking that the British Government would shiver at the very mention of his name. I never thought that my son would be afraid of death. If you can die only in this way, weeping, why did you take up such activities?"

The officials were astounded at the firmness of the mother. The freedom fighter replied, "Mother dear, these are not tears of fear - the fear of death. These are tears of joy - joy at beholding so brave as mother!"

The brave son of that brave mother was Ramaprasad Bismil. He was the leader of the famous Kakori Rail Dacoity case.

The last meeting ended.

Next morning Ramaprasad got up earlier than usual, bathed and said his morning prayers. He wrote his last letter to his mother. Then he sat down with a calm mind awaiting his death.

The officials came and removed his chains. They took him from the prison cell-towards his death.

He was completely untroubled and walked like a hero. The officials were amazed. As he moved to the gallows he joyfully chanted Vande Matharam' and 'Bharath Matha ki Jai'. At the top of his voice he shouted down with the British Empire." Then he calmly recited prayers like 'Vishwani deva savithaha dunithani.... And embraced death.

As he was being executed, there was a strong guard around the prison. When he was dead the officials brought out the dead body. Not only his parents but also hundreds of his countrymen were waiting in tears.The people of Gorakhpur deco rated the body of the brave son of Bharath as befitted a hero and carried it in a procession. Flowers were showered on the body, and the last rites were performed.

Ramaprasad Bismil joined the select band of martyrs who dreamt of a free India and made the supreme sacrifice, so that the dream might come true.

'Bismil' is the penname of Ramaprasad. As 'Bismil' he is well known as a great revolutionary poet in Hindi. At the end of his autobiography, he has reproduced some selected poems. Every line of his poems throbs with patriotic fervor.

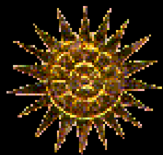
In one poem he prays: 'Even if I have to face death a thousand times for the sake of my

Motherland, I shall not be sorry. Oh Lord!Grant me a hundred births in Bharath. But grant me this, too, that each time I may give up my life in the service of the Mother land.'

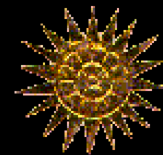
In a poem written just before going to the gallows, he prays: 'Oh Lord! Thy will be done. You are unique. Neither my tears nor I will endure. Grant me this boon, that to my last breath and the last drop of my blood, I may think of you and be immersed in your work.'

(Excerpts from Author *N.P.Shankara Narayan Rao)*





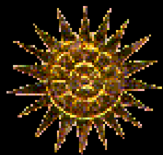
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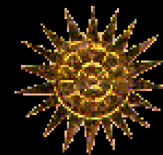




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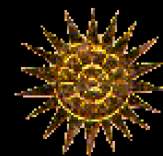


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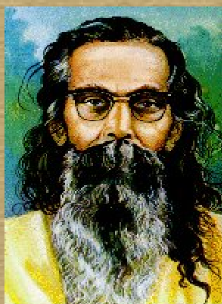
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M. S. Golwalkar, known throughout India as Guruji, was the second Sarsanghchalak of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh. His full name was Madhav Sadashiv Golwalkar.

His was an impressive personality: dignified gait; a long flowing beard reaching down to his chest; curly locks of hair touching the shoulders; a face luminous with innate intellect and learning. His was an inspiring presence. It aroused instant reverence. Whoever saw him spontaneously folded their hands and bowed their heads. Such was Guru.

He instilled patriotism in the hearts of millions of youths of the country. He explained to them the Hindu way of life and philosophy in simple words. Like a true friend, he shared in the joys and sorrows of his countrymen. He molded them into

Effective instruments for the worship of Bharat Mata as her worthy children. He demonstrated that strength derives from organization. He traveled untiringly through the length and breadth of the country almost a hundred times during the 33 years of his glorious tenure as Sarsanghchalak, kindling in the society the immortal flame of enduring love for the Motherland.

He had scaled the highest levels of spirituality through his intense austerity and perseverance. By constant study and reflection he had become a veritable treasure of knowledge. He was a voracious reader even as a boy. He avidly read whatever books he could lay his hands on, from childhood through youth. Several are the disciplines in which he had acquired commendable mastery - History, Art, Religion, Culture, Sciences, Sociology and Economics, to name a few; and he dedicated all his stupendous intellectual faculties to the service of the country. He vastly expanded the network of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh in multipledirections, and inspired and guided thousands of efficient dedicated workers spread throughout the country.

Countless discourses, thousands of letters and hundreds of press statements by Shri Guru are now part of the cherished knowledge legacy of humanity. The life of Shri Guru is lustrous and multi - faceted. His thoughts are a perennial source of inspiration for mankind. Here are a few rays of that brilliance:

1. Fearlessness is the first and foremost virtue of the brave, and the starting point of all sublime qualities.

2. 'This is my Dharma, my Vedanta. This is my Hindu Rashtra. I have to live and strive for its

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realization. I must live as an example for the entire world to follow'-only such abiding faith would provide a firm foundation for reorganization of theHindus.

3. The will of a person becomes tempered like steel when he prepares himself for the supreme sacrifice for a just and lofty goal.

4. We are not so narrow-minded as to call any one as 'alien' merely because he has changed his mode of worship. We have no objection to the use of any name in addressing God. We in the Sangh are Hindus in every particle of ours. That is why we respect all religious faiths equally. A person with religious intolerance cannot be called a Hindu at all.

5. The most demeaning sin is to remain weak in the world. It not only destroys us, but also incites others to attack us with violence.

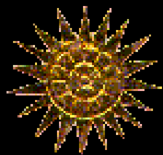
6. No doubt it requires two to fight. But both of them need not necessarily be fighters. It is, all the same, a fight, even if one goes on beating and the other gets beaten. There is no guarantee that others would behave properly with us even if we remain peaceful and cordial with them.

7. There must be an axis at the center of a wheel if it has to rotate. No wheel would rotate if its axis were outside it. There cannot be a circle with its center outside it. It is impossibility. Those cherishing extra-national loyalties can only be called traitors. Will it not be treacherous if an individual is drawing inspiration from elements beyond the boundaries of his country?

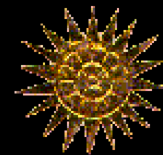
8. A grain of salt completely dissolves in water, and then retains no separate existence. But the salty taste will beevident in each drop of that water. Likewise an individual should dissolve him in the nation.

Author - Rasika Puttige





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Vinayak Damodar Savarkar was born on 18th May, 1883 in Nasik, Maharashtra. In his later years he came to be known as Vir Savarkar. He was born at a time which was the preparatory period for India's freedom Struggle.This was the time when Indian national Congress was initiated.
The end of nineteenth century and the start of twentieth century saw the revolutionary movement gain momentum.

This was also the period of English cultural influence on Indians. Well-to-do fathers wanted their sons to go to England, learn the English language, acquire the English way of life and manners.

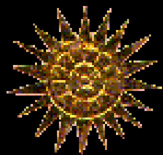
Madanlal Dhingra, Aurobindo Ghose, Vir Savarkar, had all gone or been sent to England for this purpose, to acquire English education and English way of life, but they all became more Indian. The more they came close to the English language and the English life-style, the more their hearts burned for revolution, for freeing their Motherland from the shackles of foreign rule.

Savarkar was also such an able son of India. After getting his B.A. degree, he went to England to study Law, but he joined the Indian revolutionaries there. The British Government had kept an eye on them. Vir Savarkar was arrested and was deported, that is, sent back to India. But the man of independent spirit that he was, he wanted to be free and jumped from the ship into the water. He was captured, brought to India and was sent to the Andamaris (prison).

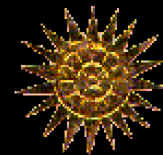
There he had to grind oil and do all sorts of strenuous work. His elder brother Ganesh Savarkar was also there. They had to face evil behaviour of their keepers. The British Authorities wanted to break the spirit of these young patriots. The British thought that physical pain and torture would make these revolutionaries forget their mission and bring them on the right or normal way of life.

The British had no knowledge of the urge and devotion felt by these revolutionaries. No amount of torture could turn away these brightest sons of India from their determined course. On 26th February, 1966, Savarkar passed away. Yet another brighter star from the Indian sky had fallen.

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Subhashchandra Bose was the most visionary and fierce activist in the pre-independence era. Known as Netaji, he followed the path which no one even could have thought of.

An unparalleled example of the declaration of Independent Indian government with a cabinet & its own army was seen in form of the Indian National Army under the leadership of Subhash Chanda Bose. It literally had a military attack on British India & had confronted them till Imphal. With the help from Germany & active support from Japan, they shook the very foundation of the British Empire. The saga of their valor is chronicled separately, under the head Indian National Army.

While he was the president of Indian National Congress during 1937 to 1939, he founded the Indian National Congress. He was acclaimed as a god like figure, akin to the many mythological heroes like Rama or Krishna, and continued as a legend in Indian mind.

Subhas Chandra was born on January 23rd 1897 in Cuttack (in present day Orissa) as the ninth child among fourteen, of Janakinath Bose, an advocate, and Prabhavatidevi, a pious and God-fearing lady. A brilliant student, he topped the matriculation examination of Calcutta province and passed his B.A. in Philosophy from the Presidency College in Calcutta. He was strongly influenced by Swami Vivekananda's teachings and was known for his patriotic zeal as a student. He joined the Indian Civil Services in England as per his parent's wishes. This kept him a little away from the Indian Freedom Movement. He finished those examinations also, at the top of his class (4th rank), he could not complete his apprenticeship and returned to India, being deeply disturbed by the Jallianwala Bagh massacre. He came under the influence of Mahatma Gandhi and joined the Indian National Congress . Gandhiji directed him to work with Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das, the Bengali leader whom Bose acknowledged as his political guru.

Due to his outspoken character for the British Government, he went to jail for around 11 times between 1920 and 1941 for periods varying between six months and three years. He was the leader of the youth wing of the Congress Party, in the forefront of the trade union movement in India and organized Service League, another wing of Congress. He was admired for his great skills in organizational development .

Bose advocated complete freedom for India at the earliest, whereas the Congress Committee wanted it in phases, through a Dominion status. Other younger leaders including Jawaharlal Nehru supported Bose and finally at the historic Lahore Congress convention, the Congress had to adopt Poorna Swaraj (complete freedom) as its motto. Bhagat Singh's martyrdom and the inability of the Congress leaders to save his life infuriated Bose and he started a movement opposing the Gandhi-Irvin Peace Pact. He was imprisoned and expelled from India. But defying the ban, he came back to India and was imprisoned again!

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He was elected president of the Indian National Congress twice in 1937 and in 1939, the second time defeating Gandhiji's nominee. He brought a resolution to give the British six months to hand India over to the Indians, failing which there would be a revolt. There was much opposition to his rigid stand, and he resigned from the post of president and formed a progressive group known as the Forward Block (1939).

During the World War 2nd he was against rendering any kind of help to the British. He warned them so. The second World War broke out in September of 1939, and just as predicted by Bose, India was declared as a warring state (on behalf of the British) by the Governor General, without consulting Indian leaders. The Congress party was in power in seven major states and all state governments resigned in protest.

Subhas Chandra Bose now started a mass movement against utilizing Indian resources and men for the great war. To him, it made no sense to further bleed poor Indians for the sake of colonial and imperial nations. There was a tremendous response to his call and the British promptly imprisoned him . He took to a hunger-strike, and after his health deteriorated on the 11th day of fasting, he was freed and was placed under house arrest. The British could do nothing except locking him in the prison.

It was in 1941, that Bose suddenly disappeared. The authorities did not come to know for many days that he was not in his Barrack) the house in which he was being guarded) He traveled by foot, car and train and resurfaced in Kabul (now in Afghanistan), only to disappear once again. In November 1941, his broadcast from German radio sent shock waves amongst the British and electrified the Indian masses who realized that their leader was working on a master plan to free their motherland. It also gave fresh confidence to the revolutionaries in India who were challenging the British in many ways.

The Axis powers (mainly Germany) assured Bose military and other help to fight the British. Japan by this time had grown into another strong world power, occupying key colonies of Dutch, French, and British colonies in Asia. Bose had struck alliance with Germany and Japan. He rightly felt that his presence in the East would help his countrymen in freedom struggle and second phase of his saga began. It is told that he was last seen on land near Kiel canal in Germany, in the beginning of 1943. A most hazardous journey was undertaken by him under water, covering thousands of miles, crossing enemy territories. He was in the Atlantic, the Middle East, Madagascar and the Indian ocean. Battles were being fought over land, in the air and there were mines in the sea. At one stage he traveled 400 miles in a rubber dingy to reach a Japanese submarine, which took him to Tokyo. He was warmly received in Japan and was declared the head of the Indian army, which consisted of about 40,000 soldiers from Singapore and other eastern regions. Bose called it the Indian National Army (INA) and a government by the name "Azad Hind Government" was declared on the 21st of October 1943. INA freed the Andaman and Nicobar islands from the British and were renamed as Swaraj and Shaheed islands. The Government started functioning.

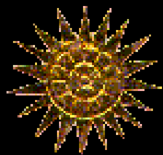
Bose wanted to free India from the Eastern front. He had taken care that Japanese interference was not present from any angle. Army leadership, administration and communications were managed by Indians only. Subhash Brigade, Azad Brigade and Gandhi Brigade were formed. INA

marched through Burma and occupied Coxtown on the Indian Border. A touching scene ensued when the solders entered their 'free' motherland. Some lay down and kissed, some placed pieces of mother earth on their heads, others wept. They were now inside India and were determined to drive out the British! Delhi Chalo (Let's march to Delhi) was the war cry.

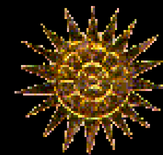
The bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki changed the history of mankind. Japan had to surrender. Bose was in Singapore at that time and decided to go to Tokyo for his next course of action. Unfortunately, the plane he boarded crashed near Taipei and he died in the hospital of severe burns. He was just 48.

He was the man whom the Indians looked upon as their future leader. They never believed that he died in plane crash. Some believe that he is still alive.

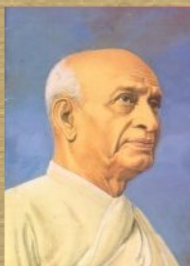




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Vallabh Bhai Patel the iron-man of India was born on 13th October, 1875, in a small village Karamsadh of Bombay region. His father Jhaber Bhai Patel was a simple farmer and mother Laad Bai was a simple lady.
From his childhood itself, Patel was a very hard-working individual. He used to help his father in farming and studied in a school at Patelaad. He passed his high-school examination in 1896. Throughout school he was a very wise and intelligent student. Inspite of poor financial conditions his father decided to send him to college but VallabhBhai refused. Around three years he stayed at home, worked hard and prepared for the District Leader's examinaton, hence passing with very good precentage.

Sardar Patel hated to work for anyone especially the Britishers. He was a person of independent nature. He started his own practice of law in a place called Godhara. Soon the practice flourished. He saved money, made financial arrangement for the entire family. He got married to Jhaberaba. In 1904, he got a baby daughter Maniben, and in 1905 his son Dahya was born. He sent his elder brother to England for higher studies in law. In 1908, Vittha Bhai returned as barrister and started practising in Bombay. In 1909 his wife became seriously ill and was taken to Bombay for treatment VallabhBhai had to go for the hearing of an urgent case and his wife died. He was stunned. He admitted his children in St. Mary's school Bombay, and he left for England. He became a barrister and retuned to India in 1913.

He started his practice in Ahmedabad and soon he became aware of the local life, activities and people's problems. He became an extremely popular person and he got elected in the Municipal Corportaion in 1917. Around 1915, he came across Mahatma Gandhi. The Swadeshi Movement was at its peak. Gandhiji gave a lecture at a place in Ahmedabad where Patel heard him and was very impressed and started actively participating in the freedom movement. The British government's atrocities were increasing. The government declared to confiscate all the lands of farmers. He forced the British government to amend the rules. He brought together the farmers and encouraged them and hence got the title of '**Sardar**' and thus became famous.

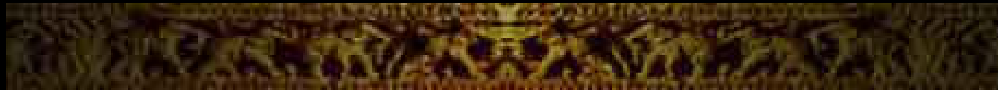
The British government considered him as a threat and his lectures were considered anti-government and he was imprisoned several times. In 1942, he took part in the Quit India Movement under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. He was arrested along with other leaders and was sent to Ahmednagar jail. Inspite of the British Rule, rulers of the small kingdoms were spending a lot of public money, and were having a nice time. Sardar Vallabh Bhai opposed this.

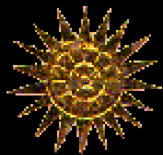
With great wisdom and political foresight, he consolidated the small kingdoms. The public was with him. He tackled the Nizam of Hyderabad and the Nawab of Junagarh who intially did not want to

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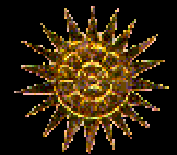
join India. There were a lot of problems connected with the reunion of the numerous states into India. Sardar Patel's untiring efforts towards the unity of the country brought success. Due to the achievement of this massive task, Sardar Patel got the title of '**Iron Man**'. ' He is one of the prestigious leaders of the world who became immmortal by uniting a scattered nation without any bloodshed.

His enthusiasm to work for the independent nation got a big jolt when Gandhiji was murdered. Patel was very attached to Gandhiji and considered him, his elder brother and teacher. He was encouraged by Mahatma Gandhi in all his work. Gandhiji's death left him broken. On 15th December, 1950 he died of a cardiac arrest. The news of his death spread all over the world. The entire nation plunged into deep sorrow, everyday life came to a standstill. A grateful nation paid a tearful homage to it's beloved leader. In 1991 the grateful nation conferred upon him the honour of Bharat Ratna.

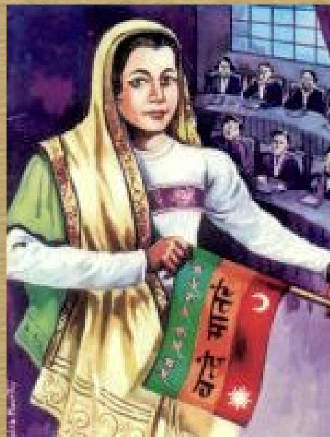




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RANA PRATAP
TATIA TOPE
GURU GOBIND
B G TILAK
BHAGAT SINGH
RAMPRASAD BISMIL
KHUDIRAM BOSE
BANKIM CHANDRA
M S GOLWALKAR
VIR SAVARKAR
SUBHASH C BOSE
SARDAR PATEL
CAMA SUKHDEV



Madame Cama was the fiery patriot who first unfurled India's flag at an international assembly. She turned away from a life of luxury and lived an exile - to serve her country. And the mighty British Government grew afraid of her.

Madame Cama, Veer Savarkar and some other patriots met and designed that tricolor flag in 1905. It was flown first in 1905 in Berlin and next in 1907 in Bengal.

The tricolor flag contained green, saffron and red stripes. In the green stripe at the top there were eight blooming lotuses. India was then divided into eight provinces and the flowers represented these provinces. The words 'Vande Mataram' in Devanagari script across the central saffron strip of the flag were a salutation to Mother India. In the red stripe at thebottom there was a half-moon on the right and the rising sun on the left. Red represents strength, saffron represents victory; and boldness and enthusiasm are represented by green. "This flag was designed by a distinguished selfless young Indian patriot" said Madame Cama. She was referring to Veer Savarkar.

In August 1907, she learnt that the International Socialist Conference would be held in Stuttgart 'in Germany. Madame Cama got a golden opportunity to expose to worldview the conditions in enslaved India. A thousand representatives from several countries of the world attended the Conference. When India's turn came, Madame Cama ascended the rostrum. She was wearing a colorful saree. She had an attractive personality. Dignity shone in the face. The representative s thought: 'She is an Indian princess.'

Madame Cama spoke about the sorrows and the poverty of lakes of Indians who were suffering silently.

'One-fifth of mankind lives in India. All lovers of freedom should cooperate to free these people from subjection.' This was the gist of the resolution, she boldly placed before the conference. She condemned the British Government which was looting from India thirty-five million pounds every year. She explained how the Indian economy was growing weaker day by day because of the lawless imperialists sucking the blood of India. At the end of her speech she unfurled the Indian flag and said:

"This flag is of Indian Independence. Behold it is born! It has been made sacred by the blood of young Indians who sacrificed their lives.I call upon you, gentle men, to rise and salute this flag of

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Indian Independence. In the name of this flag I appeal to lovers of freedom all over the world to cooperate with this flag."

As if held by magic, the whole assembly stood up and honored the flag. Madame Cama was the lady who first unfurled the Indian flag, in a foreign land, in the presence of representatives of many countries! "It is my practice to speak under the flag of my country" - she would say and unfurl the flag before she spoke at any function.

After the conference in Germany concluded she came to America. To gain the support of the people there for the sacred cause in which she was engaged she had to start a campaign. In New York she explained her objects to press reporters who met her and they were full of praise for her. She told the reporters that lakes and lakes of people in India,although illiterate and suffering from hunger, loved their country. There was confidence and hope in the voice of Madame Cama when she said that Indians would attain independence within a few years and live in liberty, equality and brotherhood.

It was 28th October 1907. The Minerva Club had organized a meeting at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel. The speaker was Madame Cama. In her speech she said that Indians should be given the political right to vote.

"People here may know of Russia. But they may not know much about conditions in India. The British Government is adopting the practice of destroying people who are educated and can think, or of sending them to jail. They are torturing the people and driving them to hospitals in jails. We desire a peaceful atmosphere and not bloody revolution. By proceeding in a non-violent manner as far as possible we have to overthrow despotic rule" said Madame Cama. Also Madame Cama spoke at several places. She may be called Mother India's representative to the United States of America.

In 1914, when the First World War began, Madame Cama's activities to gain the country's freedom became intense. The leading articles in the press condemning the autocratic rule of the British grew sharper.

To the Indian soldiers fighting for the British, she gave a warning in the following words:
"Children of Mother India, you are being deceived. Do not take part in this war. You are going to fight and die, not for India, but for the British.The British have put shackles on Mother India's hands; think how they can be removed. If you help the British, you will tighten the shackles."

She herself would visit army camps in Marseilles. There she would meet Indian soldiers and ask them to keep away from the war. Questioned she: "Are you going to fight for those who have imprisoned your mother?" Return the arms, she would preach.

The French were allies of the British. Therefore the French Government must have been dissatisfied with the propa- ganda carried on by Madame Cama. The French Government warned Madame Cama that she was carrying on false propaganda against the British.

Madame Cama passed away on 13th August 1936. She had fought for India's freedom. That freedom dawned eleven years after her death.

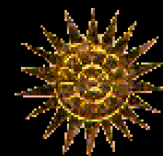
In a sense Madame Cama's life abroad where she fought for India's freedom was like living in obscurity. She sacrificed her life for the motherland. Even during the last moments of her life she urged repeatedly: "To gain freedom from subjection stand up against all difficulties." "He who loses freedom will lose virtue. Opposition of tyranny is obedience to God's command" said Madame Cama; she practiced what she preached.

(Exerpts from Author *M.S.Narasimha Murthy)*





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Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was born on October 2, 1869 in Porbandar, India. He became one of the most respected spiritual and political leaders of the 1900's. Gandhi helped free the Indian people from British rule through nonviolent resistance, and is honored by his people as the father of the Indian Nation. The Indian people called Gandhi **Mahatma**, meaning **Great Soul**.

At age 13, Gandhi joined Kasturba, age 12, in a marriage arranged by their parents. The Gandhis had four sons: Harilal and Manilal, born in India, and Ramdas and Devdas born in South Africa. While Gandhi displayed loving kindness to everyone else, he was quite demanding and severe with his wife and sons.

Gandhi studied law in London and returned to India in 1891 to practice. In 1893 he accepted a one year contract to do legal work in South Africa. At the time South Africa was controlled by the British. When he attempted to claim his rights as a British subject he was abused, and soon saw that all Indians suffered similar treatment. Gandhi stayed in South Africa for 21 years working to secure rights for Indian people. He developed a method of direct social action based upon the principles courage, nonviolence and truth called **Satyagraha**. He believed that the way people behave is more important than what they achieve. Satyagraha promoted nonviolence and civil disobedience as the most appropriate methods for obtaining political and social goals.

In 1915 Gandhi returned to India. Within 15 years he became the leader of the Indian nationalist movement. Using the tenets of Satyagraha he lead the campaign for Indian independence from Britain. Gandhi was arrested many times by the British for his activities in South Africa and India. He believed it was honorable to go to jail for a just cause. Altogether he spent seven years in prison for his political activities. More than once Gandhi used fasting to impress upon others the need to be nonviolent.

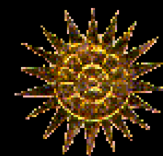
India was granted independence in 1947, and partitioned into India and Pakistan. Rioting between Hindus and Muslims followed. Gandhi had been an advocate for a united India where Hindus and Muslims lived together in peace. On January 13, 1948, at the age of 78, he began a fast with the purpose of stopping the bloodshed. After 5 days the opposing leaders pledged to stop the fighting and Gandhi broke his fast. Under Gandhi's leadership, it was agreed to partition India, giving a fifth of the landmass of India over to the Muslims who demanded their own Islamic nation, which became today's Pakistan. Gandhi was assassinated by Nathuram Godse, who held Gandhi responsible for the partition of India and feared worse to come under his leadership. Today, some Hindu conservatives still blame Gandhi for the partition and many of the ills of present day India, but to most, Gandhi is still revered as the Mahatma and the father of India's independence.

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Mahmud of Gaznavi

(From the accounts of arikh-i-Yamini of Utbi the secretary of Mahmud of Gaznavi)

- **At Thaneshwar.**

  "The blood of the infidels flowed so copiously at Thanesar that the stream was discolored, not withstanding its purity, and people were unable to drink it. The Sultan returned with plunder which is impossible to count. Praise be to Allah for the honor he bestows on Islam and Muslims."

- **At Somnath**

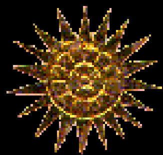
  "The Muslims paid no regard to the booty till they had satiated themselves with the slaughter of the infidels and worshipers of sun and fire.... The number of infidels killed exceeded 50,000"

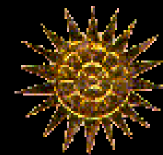
- **At Mathura**

  "The infidels...deserted the fort and tried to cross the foaming river...but many of them were slain, taken or drowned... Nearly fifty thousand men were killed."

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Mahmud of Ghori

(from Hasan Nizami's *Taj-ul-Maasir*)

- **Kol (Modern Aligarh)**

  "Those of the horizon who were wise and acute were converted to Islam, but those who stood by their ancestoral faith were slain with the sword"

- **Kol (Modern Aligarh)**
-

  20,000 prisoners were taken and made slaves
  'Three bastions were raised as high as heaven with their heads and their carcases became food for the beasts of prey

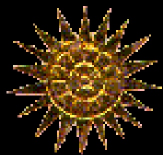
- **Kalinjar**
  50,000 prisoners were taken as slaves

- **Varnasi or Kasi (Benaras) :**
  Kamil-ut-Tawarikh of Ibn Asir records,

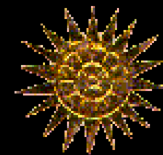
  > "The slaughter of Hindus (at Varanasi) was immense; none were spared except women and children,(who were taken into slavery) and the carnage of men went on until the earth was weary."

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Zahiru'd-Din Muhammed Babur (1526 C.E. - 1520 C.E.)

Babur's Own Words on Killing Hindus:
For the sake of Islam I became a wanderer,
I battled infidels and Hindus,
I determined to become a maryr
Thank God I became a Killer of Non-Muslims!

From Baburnama, the Memoires of Babur Himself:
In AH 934 (2538 C.E.) I attacked Chanderi and by the grace of Allah captured it in a few hours. We got the infidels slaughtered and the place which had be Daru'l-Harb (nation of non-muslim) for years was made into a Daru'l-Islam (muslim nation).

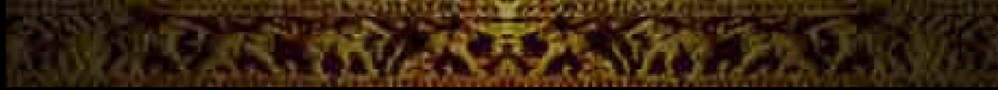
Guru Nanak on Babur's atrocities:
Source:*Rag Asa* Guru Nanak Dev witnessed first hand the atrocities Babur committed on Hindus and recorded them in his poems. He says: Having attacked Khuraasaan, Babar terrified Hindustan. The Creator Himself does not take the blame, but has sent the Mugal as **the messenger of death**. There was so much slaughter that the people screamed. Didn't You feel compassion, Lord? pg (360)

On the condition of Hindu women in Babur's monster rule:
Those heads adorned with braided hair, with their parts painted with vermillion - those heads were shaved with scissors, and their throats were choked with dust.They lived in palatial mansions, but now, they cannot even sit near the palaces.... ropes were put around their necks, and their strings of pearls were broken. Their wealth and youthful beauty, which gave them so much pleasure, have now become their enemies. The order was given to the soldiers, who dishonored them, and carried them away. If it is pleasing to God's Will, He bestows greatness; if is pleases His Will, He bestows punishment pg(417-18)

On the nature of Mughal rule under Babur:
First, the tree puts down its roots, and then it spreads out its shade above. The kings are tigers, and their officials are dogs; they go out and awaken the sleeping people to harass them. The public servants inflict wounds with their nails. The dogs lick up the blood that is spilled. Source:Rag Malar, (pg.1288)

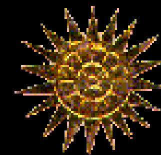
From an article by Dr. Harsh Narain on Muslim Testimony (Indian Express 2/26/90):
Since the establishment of Zahiru'd-Din Ghazi's rule, officers and religious leaders spread Islam

vigorously desteroying the Hindu faith. We cleared the filth of Hinduism from Faizabad and Avadh.





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Sultan Firuz Shah Tughlaq

(from Insha-i-Mahry by Amud Din Abdullah bin Mahru)

Delhi: -a punishment in detail (from *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*)

"A report was brought to the Sultan than there was in Delhi an old Brahman who persisted in publicly performing the worship of idols in his house and that people of the city, both Muslims and Hindus used to resort to his house to worship the idol. The Brahman had constructed a wooden tablet which was covered within and without with paintings of demons and other objects. An order was accordingly given to the Brahman and was brought before Sultan.The true faith was declared to the Brahman and the right course pointed out. but he refused to accept it. A pile was risen on which the Kaffir with his hands and legs tied was thrown into and the wooden tablet on the top. The pile was lit at two places his head and his feet. The fire first reached him in the feet and drew from him a cry and then fire completley enveloped him. Behold Sultan for his strict adherence to law and rectitude."

Delhi : (after Hindus paid the toleration tax (*zar-i zimmiya*) and poll-tax(*jizya*) they were foolish enough to build their temples.so...) "Under divine guidance I (Sultan) destroyed these temples and I killed the leaders of these infedility and others I subjected to stripes and chastisement "

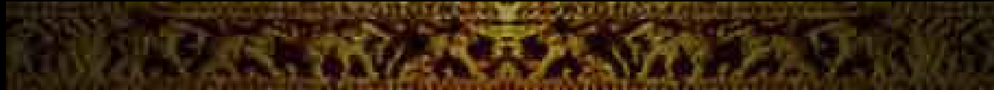
Gohana (Haryana):
"Some Hindus had erected a new idol-temple in the village of Kohana and the idolaters used to assemble there and perform their idolatrous rites. These people were seized and brought before me. I ordered that the perverse conduct of these leaders of this wickedness be punished by publicly abd that they should be put to deathe before the gate of the palace."

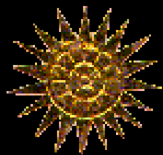
Jajnagar:(Expedition objectives as stated by Sultan: Source:Ainn-ul-Mulk)

- massacring the unbelievers
- demolishing their temples
- hunting the elephants
- getting a glimpse of their enchanting country

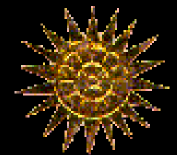
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Orissa:*'Sirat-i-Firoz Shahi'* records his expedition with the following words:
"Nearly 100,000 men of Jajnagar had taken refuge with their women, children, kinsmen and relations The swordsmen of Islam turned the island into a basin of blood by the massacre of the unbelievers. Women with babies and pregnant ladies were haltered, manacled, fettered and enchained, and pressed as slaves into service in the house of every soldier."





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The Jihads of Shihabuddin, the Sultankalka of Ghur

Around 1140, the Islamized Turko-Mongol chiefs of the Shansabanid tribe occupied Ghor in Afghanistan. Initially it was a vassal of the Ghaznavid Sultans, but around 1130 it came into conflict with them, after one of the leading Shansabanid nobles was murdered by the Ghaznavid Sultan, Bahram. A ferocious war ensued between the Sultans of Ghor and Ghazni, till Alla-ud-din Ghori invaded Ghazni with his entire cavalry and wrested it from Bahram. Alla-ud-din sacked the Indian spoils that Mahmud had placed there, massacred the city s population in a 7-day killing spree and subsequently burnt it down. The next Ghaznavid Sultan, Khushro Maliq was driven out of Afghanistan by a coalition of Oghuz Turks and the Ghorids in 1157, and the Oghuz took Ghazni. The sons of Alla-ud-din, Ghiyas-ud-din Mu azz-ud-din Ghori and Shihab-ud-din Muhammad Ghori defeated the Oghuz and annexed Ghazni in 1174. Ghiyas-ud-din, crowned himself Sultan, and appointed his brother Sultankalka. Shihab-ud-din was assigned the task of extending the kingdom to the East and he naturally gravitated towards India. 13 bloody campaigns that ravaged Northern India followed:

Early in 1175 he invaded Punjab and sacked and burned Uch...(1)

In 1178 he advanced south and marched towards Gujarat, but here the Indians acted quickly and rallying under the western chAlukya king MUlarAja II routed the Islamic forces completely forcing him to retreat...(2)

In 1179 Ghori sent a message to PrithivirAja chAhamAna to make common cause with him against the Chalukyas. Prithivaraj however, wise disregarding his foolish minister, kadambavAsa s advise to make a common cause with Ghori, preemptively attacked NaDDula and reconquered it from the Moslems.

Shihab recovered in 1180 and invaded Sindh and ravaged the population carrying away much loot...(3)

Then Shihabuddin Muhammad, quickly followed it up in 1181 and 1184 with two invasions of Lavapura (Lahore) accompanied with much slaughter...(4+5)

In 1186 he invaded the Ghaznavid occupied Punjab and defeated the Sultan Khushro Maliq and wrested Punjab...(6)

1188 The Ghur Sultankalka invaded the ChAhamAna kingdom and sacked the fort of Tabarhindah killing the Hindu male populace and raping the women. Hindu refugees flocked around Delhi alarming the ChAhamAnas...(7)

1191 PrithivirAj advanced to meet Shihabuddin s raid and routed him in the great battle of Tarai. While the Muslims suffered a crushing defeat, the Indians failed to butcher them to man and allowed Shihab to get away unharmed. He fled back to Central Asia leaving Punjab completely undefended...(8)

1191 PrithivirAj attacked Tabarhindah and took it back from the Muslims. Here the biggest mistake of the Hindus was not to reconquer and arm Punjab suitably.

1192 Shihab returned and sacked Tabarhindah again. This was followed by the second battle of Tarai, the ChAhamAna army was crushed and Prithiviraj was captured and brutally tortured to death...(9)

1192 the Ghur Sultankalka made a second trust towards Ajayamerupura (Ajmer) and sacked it smashing Hindu temples and a Hindu university in course of this invasion. The Hindus captured in this expedition caused slave prices to fall to a few Dirhams in the Muslim markets...(10)

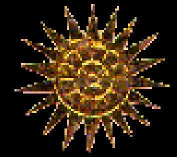
1193 The sultankalka invaded Kannauj and slew the GAhadwala king Jayachandra. He followed this up with an invasion of vArANsipura slaughtering Hindus with great savagery and desecrating the holy city...(11+12)

After this, his viceroy Kutub-ud-din (also his lover?) and the Turkish adventurer Ikhtiyaruddin Khalji furthered the violence of Islam in the land of Hind. Meanwhile Shihab s brother died in Ghazna and he crowned himself Sultan and immediately launched himself into another Jihad on the infidels of Hindustan in 1206. The exact course of this campaign is not clear. While on the North-western reaches of the Sindhu, he was ambushed by the Khokar chiefs and shot down by an arrow...(13). Thus ended the carrier of the Moslem brigand who brought misery to the whole of northern India through his 13 invasions.





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The Jihads of Alla-ud-din Khalji

The one time when it appeared that the sanAtana dharma might vanish off the face of bhArata was during the ferocious jihads of Alla-ud-din of the Khalji tribe. The Khaljis entered India from Ghazna during the reign of the Mamluq Sultan Qutub-ud-din Aibak. The first of them to make his mark Bakhtiyar Khalji, whose savage jihad in Bihar and destruction of the Indian centers of learning like Nalanda is only well known. Jalal-ud-din Khalji, another member of this tribe, was accepted as the Sultan of Delhi by a confederation of Turkic tribes, after the collapse of the Mamluq Balban s regime. Jalal opened his innings by consolidating the Turkic regime in India by suppressing other competing Maliqs and appointed his nephew, Alla-ud-din to expand his domains. We shall briefly consider his campaigns:

In 1291 he was sent to destroy the remaining Kaffirs of Bhilsa in Central India. Il-tut-mish, the Mamluq had earlier desecrated this Hindu-Buddhist temple-university complex but it had fallen away from Islamic control. Alla invaded and conquered Bhilsa and total exterminated the Kaffirs and left behind a ghost city whose long lost temple remnants can be seen even today.

1292 He attacked the Vidisha in Central India, a great center of learning and destroyed it completely and slew the inhabitants.

1292 His spies got him the news of the great wealth of the yAdava dynasty of mahArashTra and Alla promptly invaded it and carried away a large amount of loot.

1295 In a remarkable campaign Alla carried the war right to Devagiri the heart of the yAdava kingdom. He demolished and looted all the temples in Devagiri.

In 1296 with this loot Alla bought most of the Khalji army and murdered his uncle Jalal and drove away his aunt and cousin and declared himself Sultan of Hind. Jaziya was imposed on the Kaffirs.

1296. Latter in the year he joined the Southern Alliance of the Chagadai Ulus (predominantly

Turkic tribes) against the Northern Alliance (predominantly Mongolic) and routed the latter in a battle at Jallandar securing the Panjab for himself.

In 1297 he invaded Gujarat and destroyed the ancient Surya temples at Mehsana and subjugated the Hindus of the land with much slaughter. The rAja of Gujarat fled to Devagiri and the Hindu kings tried to fight back under shankara yAdava. Alla sent Ulugh Khan and Nusrat Khan against them, who defeated the yAdavas and the Gujarat king. They captured and castrated a Hindu youth who was name Maliq Kaffr and presented him to Alla, who took him as his lover.

1298 He sent his fiercest il-ghazi, Zafar Khan, to wage a jihad against the pagan Northern Alliance chief Suldus who was sent by Chagadai Kha Khan Duwa. The battle concluded in a draw after fierce fighting.

1298 Later in the year he battled against Qutulugh Khawaja, a son of Duwa, of the Northern Alliance, the results were inconclusive

1299 Qutulugh Khawaja reached the doors of Delhi with a large horde. Alla s il-ghazi s Zafar Khan, Ulugh Khan and Nusrat Khan defeated Qutulugh Khawaja, but Zafar Khan was shot dead by an arrow in this battle.

1299 Ulugh Khan was sent to quell the Hindu resistance in Gujarat. He conquered the fort of Junagad and demolished all the temples in the surrounding regions and then went on to attack Somnath and destroy the great temple that the Hindus had rebuilt.

1299. Hammira Deva of the Ranthambhor defeated Alla as he attempted to sack the Rajput stronghold.

1301. Alla returned with his entire force to sack Ranthambhor. He succeeded and slew Hammira Deva. He conducted a massive temple demolition operation destroying all the temples of Jhain and Sawai Madhopur and slew the inhabitants.

1303. Chittor alone that had held out against the Muslims, attracted Khalji s attention due to its beautiful queen Padmini. Khalji sacked and burned Chittor after slaying Rana Rattan Singh.

1303. Turghai and Ali Beg of the Northern Alliance wrested the Punjab from Alla and invaded Sindh. They blockaded Delhi itself for two months but retreated due to the summer heat.

1304. Jihad was launched on Ujjaini. This ancient center of Indian learning was destroyed completely. Chanderi was attacked next by Alla and the ancient temples were demolished.

1305. Malwa and Mandu were savaged and the inhabitants slaughtered.

1306. Then Turghai and Ali Beg defeated Khalji s army and captured Lahore and Amroha near Delhi. Tughlaq Khan, a general of Alla, counter-attacked defeated and captured 9000 Pagan Turko-Mongols of the Northern Alliance. He had them all trampled to death by elephants for refusing to accept Islam.

1308. Qebek (another son of Chagadai ruler, Duwa) and Ibaqmand of the Northern Alliance struck back captured Multan. But Alla defeated them on their way back and again slaughtered all the pagan prisoners he took.

1308. Later in the year, the Rajputs regrouped in Sivana and declared independence but Alla smashed them in a lightning campaign and destroyed the temples in the region.

1309. He sent Maliq Kaffr against Devagiri that was attempting to reassert itself. Maliq Kaffr defeated the yAdavas and penetrated the Hoysala kingdom.

1310 Maliq Kaffr destroyed Dwarasamudra after a fierce battle and ended the Hindu Hoysala rule over those regions.

1311 Maliq Kaffr devastated Telengana and destroyed the temples of Warangal. He then invaded Madhurai and destroyed the Pandyan kingdom. The temples of Madhurai and Chidambaram were destroyed. Kaffr returned with enormous amounts of gold looted from the destroyed temples.

1311 Alla invaded Jalor to destroy the Rajput fight back and massacred the Hindu population while destroying the city.

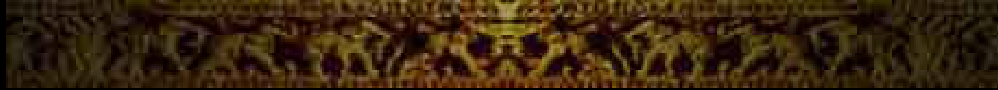
1313 Devagiri made another attempt to defy the Muslim terror, Alla personally invaded mahArashTra to ravage the Devagiri kingdom.

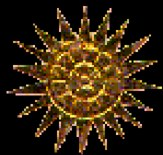
1314 Alla more or less became a puppet in the hand of his lover Kaffr and subsequently died in 1316.

1316 Death.

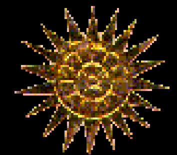
Thereafter, Maliq Kaffr killed all the members of the Khalji tribe except for Qutbuddin Mubarak, Alla s last son, and ruled in his name. Kaffr was murdered by the Turkish chiefs of the Southern Alliance and Mubarak ascended the throne. In 1318 Qutbuddin Mubarak invaded Devagiri again as its ruler Haripala Deva had cast off the Muslim yoke. Haripala faced a massive defeat and was captured. He was skinned alive and his head and skin were placed on display at the entrance to the Devagiri fort. Thus ended the yAdava dynasty and Hindu sovereignty in mahArashTra. Mubarak s lover Khusru murdered him and made himself Sultan. Amir Qazaghan of the Qara Unas tribe, from Konduz, became the lord of the Southern Alliance and sent his commander al Ghazi al Maliq Tughlaq to seize the throne of Delhi after murdering Khusru.

Sources: Histoire des Mongols DOhsson.; Hafiz-i-Abru, trns Byani (Paris 1936). Tazjiyat-al-amsar va tajriyat of Wassaf; A Forgotten Empire : Vijayanagar : A Contribution to the history of India", Robert Sewell





HALL OF SHAME



HALL OF SHAME
GHAZNI
GHORI
BABUR
FIRAZH TUGHLAQ
SHIHABUDDIN
ALLAUDDIN
AURANGAZEB
JAHANGIR
SHAH JAHAN
GENERAL DYER



Aurangazeb (1658 C.E. - 1707 C.E.)

Aurangzeb considered himself "The Scourge Of The Kafirs" (non-believers) and closed Hindu schools and libraries. In his lifetime he destroyed more than 10,000 Hindu, Buddhist and Jam temples and often erected mosques in their stead.3 In 1669 in Agra he had hacked off the limbs of the recalcitrant Hindu King Gokla and in 1672 several thousand revolting Hindus were slaughtered in Mewat.

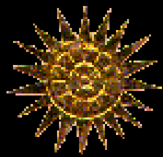
From: *Maasi-i-Alamgiri*

- Issued general order to destroy all centers of Hindu learnings including Varnasi and destroyed the temple at Mathura and renamed it as Islamabad
- In Khandela (rajastan) he killed 300 Hindus in one day for they resisted the destruction of their temple.
- In Udaipur all Hindus of the town were killed as they vowed to defend the temple of Udaipur from destruction.
- 172 temples were destroyed in Udaipur.
- 66 temples were pulled down in Amber. All Hindu clerks were dismissed from the office of the Imperial empire.
- In Pandhpur , Maharashtra, the Emperor ordered and executed the destruction of temple and butchering of cows within the temple.

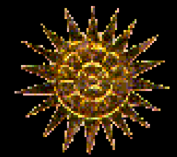
Aurangazeb also tortured to death the disciples of Guru Tegh bahadur before his death and also killed Guru. Guru Tegh Bahadur - the pride of Hindustan was martyred for he spoke for the persecuted Hindus of Hindustan. Aurangazeb also killed Guru Gobind singh's two children aged less than ten by walling them alive for not accepting the choice of Islam. In Punjab Muslim governors killed hundreds of Sikh children and made Sikh women eat the flesh of their own killed children. Banda Bahadur another great Sikh martyr before being torturd to death was also made to eat the flesh of his own children killed before his eyes. Any Muslim bringing the head of a dead Sikh was also awarded money.

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Jahangir (1605 C.E. - 1628 C.E.)
Source: *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*

Though in the beginning of his rule Jahangir followed the humanistic rule of his father Akbar the great -the policy of *sulehkul* even issued a proclamation against the forcible conversion of Hindus to Islam, he revoked Akbar's orders that those who have been forcibly converted from Islam could return to Hinduism. He severely punished Kaukab, Sharif and Abdul Latif for showing inclination to Hinduism. He also prohibited the free inter-marriage customs between Hindus and Muslims in Kashmir. Hindus marrying Muslim girls and those who had already married were given a hoice between Islam and death. Many were killed.



Jahangir's torture of Guru Arjun Dev ji: Guru was imprisoned at Lahore fort. He was chained to a post in an open place exposed to the sun from morning to evening in the summer months of May to June. Below his feet a heap of sand was put which burnt like a furnace. Boiling water was poured on his naked body at intervals. His body was covered with blisters all over. In this agony Guru used to utter.

> Tera Kiya Metha lage, naam padarath Nanak mange*(whatever you ordain appears sweet. I supplicate for the gift of name)*

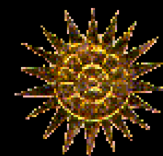
The Guru was ordercd to be executed. In addition a fine of Rupees two lakhs was imposed on him. Some historians say that, as a measure of clemency at the intervention of Mian Mir, this fine was imposed in lieu of the sentence of death. The Sikhs offered to pay the fine themselves but the Guru forbade them to do so. He replied to the Emperor, "Whatever money I have is for the poor, the friendless and the stranger. If thou ask for money thou mayest take what I have; but if thou ask for it by way of fine, I shall not give thee even a Kaurz (penny)." The Guru accepted death by torture.

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Shah Jahan (1658 C.E. - 1707 C.E.)

In 1632 Shah jahan ordered that all Hindu temples recently erected or in the course of construction should be razed to the ground. In Benares alone seventy six temples were destroyed. Christian churches at Agra and Lahore were demolished. In a manner befitting the Prophet he had ten thousand inhabitants executed by being "blown up with powder, drowned in water or burnt by fire". Four thousand were taken captive to Agra where they were tortured to try to convert them to Islam. Only a few apostacised, the remainder were trampled to death by elephants, except for the younger women who went to harems.

Shahjahan put enormous eonomic pressure on Hindus particularly peasents to become Muslims. The criminals too were forced to become Muslims.

Source: ***Badshah Nama, Qazinivi & Badshah Nama , Lahori***

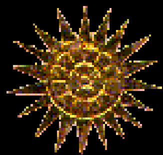
> When Shuja was appointed as governor of Kabul he carried on a ruthless war in the Hindu territory beyond Indus...The sword of Islam yielded a rich crop of converts.... Most of the women (to save their honour) burnt themselves to death. Those captured were distributed among Muslim Mansabdars.

Source: ***Manucci, Storia do Mogor vol-II p.451 & Travels of Frey Sebastian Manrique***

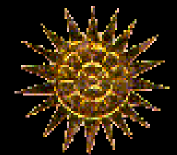
> Under Shahjahan peasents were compelled to sell their women and children to meet their revenue requirements....The peasents were carried off to various Markets and fairs to be sold with their poor unhappy wives carrying their small children crying and lamenting. According to Qaznivi Shahjagan had decreed they should be sold to Muslim lords.

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General Reginal Dyer
Commander of Amritsar Massacre



Soon after Dyer's arrival, on the afternoon of April 13, 1919, some 10,000 or more unarmed men, women, and children gathered in Amritsar's Jallianwala Bagh (bagh, "garden"; but before 1919 it had become a public square) to attend a protest meeting, despite a ban on public assemblies. It was a Sunday, and many neighbouring village peasants also came to Amritsar to celebrate the Hindu Baisakhi Spring Festival. Dyer positioned his men at the sole, narrow passageway of the Bagh, which was otherwise entirely enclosed by the backs of abutted brick buildings. Giving no word of warning, he ordered 50 soldiers to fire into the gathering, and for 10 to 15 minutes 1,650 rounds of ammunition were unloaded into the screaming, terrified crowd, some of whom were trampled by those desperately trying to escape. According to official estimates, nearly 400 civilians were killed, and another 1,200 were left wounded with no medical attention. Dyer, who argued his action was necessary to produce a "moral and widespread effect," admitted that the firing would have continued had more ammunition been available.

The governor of the Punjab province supported the massacre at Amritsar and, on April 15, placed the entire province under martial law. Viceroy Chelmsford, however, characterized the action as "an error of judgment," and when Secretary of State Montagu learned of the slaughter, he appointed a commission of inquiry, headed by Lord Hunter. Although Dyer was subsequently relieved of his command, he returned a hero to many in Britain, especially conservatives, who presented him with a jeweled sword inscribed "Saviour of the Punjab."

The Jallianwala Bagh massacre turned millions of moderate Indians from patient and loyal supporters of the British raj into nationalists who would never again place trust in British "fair play." It thus marks the turning point for a majority of the Congress' supporters from moderate cooperation with the raj and its promised reforms to revolutionary noncooperation. Liberal Anglophile leaders, such as Jinnah, were soon to be displaced by the followers of Gandhi, who would launch, a year after that dreadful massacre, his first nationwide satyagraha ("devotion to truth") campaign as India's revolutionary response.

"It was a horrible duty to perform. But I think it was a merciful thing. I thought I should shoot well and shoot straight so that I or anybody else would not have had to shoot again."

The words of Brigadier General Reginald Dyer himself -- the perpetrator of the Jallianwala Bagh massacre which left 379 dead and 1,500 injured in 1919.

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Deposing before the Hunter commission inquiring into the shooting, General Dyer said his action was meant to punish the people if they disobeyed his orders. He thought from a military point of view, such an action would create a good impression in Punjab.

However, what was more damning was his statement, "I think it quite possible that I could have dispersed the crowd without firing but they would have come back again and laughed, and I would have made, what I consider, a fool of myself."

He contended that martial law existed *de facto* in Amritsar at that time although only demonstrations had been forbidden. He also claimed that his military column had stopped at every important point to announce that all meetings have been banned which were accompanied by the beating of drums.

However, when questioned with the help of a map of the city, General Dyer was forced to admit that important localities had been omitted, and a large number of people would not have known about the proclamation.

He confessed he did not take any steps to attend to the wounded after the firing. "Certainly not. It was not my job. Hospitals were open and they could have gone there," came his pathetic response.

However, the misery suffered by the people was reflected in Rattan Devi's account. She was forced to keep a nightlong vigil, armed with a bamboo stick to protect her husband's body from jackals and vultures. Curfew with shoot-at-sight orders had been imposed from 2000 hours that night.

Rattan Devi stated, "I saw three men writhing in great pain and a boy of about 12. I could not leave the place. The boy asked me for water but there was no water in that place...At 2 am, a jat who was lying entangled on the wall asked me to raise his leg. I went up to him and took hold of his clothes drenched in blood and raised him up. Heaps of bodies lay there, a number of them innocent children. I shall never forget the sight. I spent the night crying and watching..."

General Dyer admitted before the commission that he came to know about the meeting at Jallianwala Bagh at 1240 hours that day, but took no steps to prevent it.

Colum, a scholar who interviewed his widow and consulted his papers, said, "This unexpected gift of fortune, this unhoped for defiance, this concentration of rebels in an open space -- it gave him an opportunity as he could not have devised. It separated the guilty from the innocent, it placed them where he would have wised them to be -- within the reach of his sword."

However, General Dyer admitted in his deposition that the gathering at the Bagh was not a concentration only of rebels, but people who had covered long distances to participate in the Baisakhi fair.

Swinson, an English journalist, described the scene as: "Hundreds were asleep in the sun, others

were concentrating on their game of cards. A number of them had come with their children, three to 12 years old. Some 27,000 odd people had gathered in the Bagh, an open space surrounded on all sides by houses with only four narrow entrances."

General Dyer said he would have used his machine guns if he could have got them into the enclosure, but these were mounted on armoured cars. He said he did not stop firing when the crowd began to disperse because he thought it was his duty to keep firing until the crowd dispersed, and that a little firing would do no good.

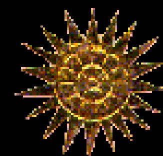
He was censured by the Hunter commission for his action. He retired and was sent back to England. However, he continued to maintain that he had done no disservice to the Raj, and what he did was right, for which the British ought to be thankful.

In London, the general was given a hero's welcome. Called "the saviour of India," the editor of the *Morning Post* collected 3,000 pounds to award him for his services. The Tories and a majority of members in the House of Lords rallied to his support. The army counsel which took up the case charged him only for an error of judgement, and recommended his retirement on half pay with no prospects of further employment. A British court even exonerated him of this charge.





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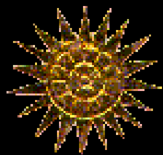
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1947 Partition

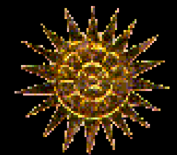


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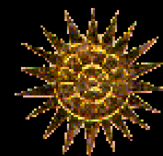
Kashmir



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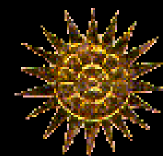
Pakistan



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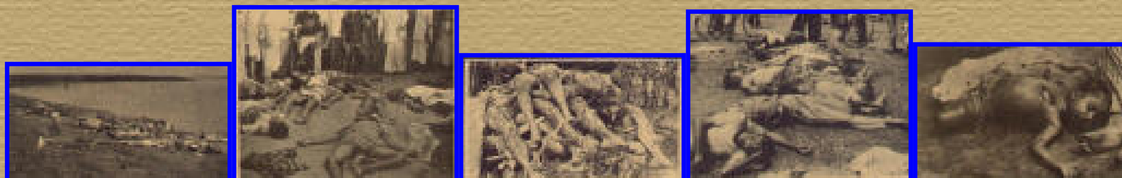


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Bangladesh



1971 Genocide (click on image to enlarge)



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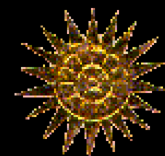
Genocide continues today within India itself. Click on the state names below to read accounts of the persecution and slaughter of Hindus that continues today in their own land...



Andhra Pradesh
Arunachal Pradesh
Assam
Bihar
Chhattisgarh
Goa
Gujarat
Haryana
Himachal Pradesh
Jammu & Kashmir
Jharkhand
Karnataka
Kerala
Madhya Pradesh
Maharastra
Manipur
Meghalaya
Mizoram
Nagaland
Orissa
Punjab
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Sikkim
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Tripura
Uttar Pradesh
Uttaranchal
West Bengal



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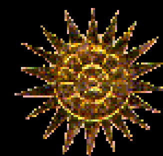
Sri Lanka



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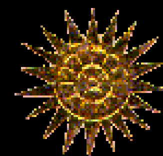


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The Roma

In Auschwitz there is a Great House

by Ruzena Danielova

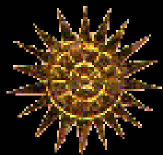


Ausvicate hi kher bro Odoj besel mro pirano Besel, besel gondolinel Te pre mande pobisterel	In Auschwitz there is a great house And there my husband is imprisoned He sits and sits and laments And thinks about me
O tu kalo cirikloro Lidza mange mro lilro Lidza, lidza mra romake Hoj som phandlo Ausvicate	Oh, you black bird! Carry my letter! Carry it to my wife For I am jailed in Auschwitz
Ausvicate bokha bare Te so te chal amen nane Ani oda koter maro O blokris bibachtl	In Auschwitz there is great hunger And we have nothing to eat Not even a piece of bread And the block guard is bad

The Genocide of the Roma by Ian Hancock
The Roma Persecution by Harold Tanner
The Forgotten Holocaust by Alex Bandy
Roma and the Nazi Terror by Myriam Novitch
Hitler's Other Victims by Elizabeth Pond
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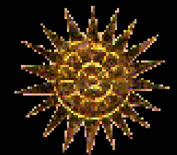
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Five Questions About the Holocaust
That Shameful Pig Farm (Lety) by V•av Trojan
Confronting a Roma Killing Field in the Czech Lands by Ivan Gabal
Assaults on Truth and Memory by Ward Churchill
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Web Genocide Documentation Centre
Non-Jewish Victims of the Holocaust
A Teacher's Guide to the Holocaust
Academic Info: Holocaust Studies
Westerbork: Portal of Auschwitz
Auschwitz Schl闌 Nur - Austria
The Forgotten Camps
The Mazal Library
Holocaust/Shoah
The Nizkor Project
Testaments of Genocide
Meyer's Holocaust Links
Cybrary of the Holocaust
Women and the Holocaust
The Simon Wiesenthal Center
United States Holocaust Memorial Museum
Memorial Museums for the Victims of Naziism
Ressources Documentaires sur le G鋡cide Nazi
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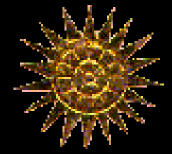
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HISTORICAL OVERVIEW



THE GREEKS
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THE TURKS
THE MAMLUKS
THE KHILJIS
THE TUGHLAQS
THE SAYYIDS
THE BAHAMANIS
THE MUGHALS
THE PORTUGUESE
THE BRITISH

THE TURKISH INVASION
(Continued)

Most of the Rajput rulers of the time were **champions of Hinduism**, though some of them also **patronized Jainism**. The Rajput rulers protected the privileges of the brahmanas and of the **caste system**. Between the tenth and the twelfth century, **temple-building** activity in north India reached it's climax.



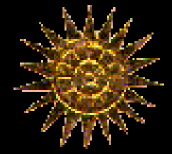
The most representative temples of this type are the group of temples at **Khajuraho** in Madhya Pradesh. Most of these temples were built by the Chandellas, who ruled in the area from the beginning of the ninth to the end of the thirteenth century. In Orissa, magnificent examples of temple architecture are the **Lingaraja temple** (11th century) and the **Sun temple** of Konark (13th century). The famous **Jagannath temple** at Puri also belongs to this period.

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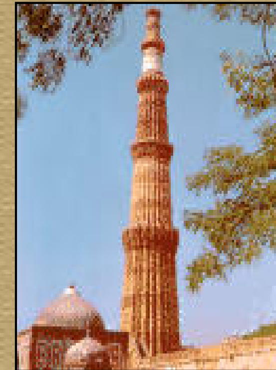
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THE MAMLUK (SLAVE) DYNASTY (Continued)

Iltutmish (1210 AD - 1236 AD), son-in-law of Aibak - succeeded Aibak as the sultan by defeating Aibak's son. Thus, the principle of heredity, of son succeeding his father was checked at the outset. Iltutmish must be regarded as the **real consolidator** of the Turkish conquests in north India.

He gave the new state capital, **Delhi**, a monarchical form of government and governing class. He introduced **Iqta -** grant of revenue from a territory in lieu of salary. He maintained a central army and introduced coins of **Tanka** (silver) and **Jital** (copper). The famous **Qutub Minar** was completed during his reign. He despatched an expedition against the **Chalukyas** of Gujarat but it was repelled with losses.

Around this time, **Mongols** under the leadership of **Ghinghiz Khan,** swept across central Asia and mercilessly sacked the kingdoms. They periodically crossed river Indus to attack Punjab and Iltutmish had to keep constant check on this side.



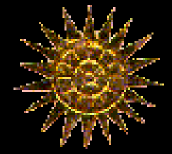
The Qutub Minar

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The Khiljis
(Continued)

Alauddin also repelled the **Mongols** successfully. His military success was because of the creation of a **large standing army** directly recruited and paid by the state. He **revoked all grants** made by previous sultans, introduced **price control** covering almost the entire market and **rationed** the grain.



Empire of Allaudin Khilji

In order to effectively subordinate nobles, he **banned** drinking of intoxicants. The sultan's permission was necessary before **marriage** could be arranged among the member of nobility, so that marriage alliances of a political nature could be prevented. No further rebellion took place during his life time, but in the long run his methods **proved harmful to the dynasty**. As the old nobility was destroyed, the new nobility was **taught to accept** any one who could ascend the throne of Delhi.

Kings followed in **quick succession** after his death, till in 1320, a group of officers led by **Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq** raised the banner of **revolt** and put an end to the Khilji dynasty.

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The Tughlaqs
(Continued)

Muhammad Bin-Tughlaq decided to **move his capital** from Delhi to Deogir (Daulatabad), in order to control the Deccan and extend the empire into the south. The plan ended in failure because of **discontent** amongst those who had been forced to move to Deogir and Muhammad also found that he could not keep a watch on the northern frontier.

In 1334 **bubonic plague** wiped out more than half his army, and the army ceased to be effective. Due to this, in 1334 the **Pandyan kingdom** (Madurai) rejected the authority of the sultanate and this was followed by **Warangal**. In 1336 the **Vijayanagara empire** and in 1337 the **Bahamani kingdom** were founded. They built magnificent capitals and cities with many splendid buildings, promoted arts and also provided law and order and the development of commerce and handicrafts. Thus while the **forces of disintegration** gradually triumphed in **north India**, **south India** and the **Deccan** had a long spell of **stable** government.

Firoz Shah Tughlaq (1351 AD - 1388 AD) succeeded Muhammad. Having become sultan with the support of the nobles and the theologians, he had to appease them. His death was followed by civil war among his descendants.

The sultanate became weak and in 1398, the **Mongols**, under the leadership of **Timur** (Tamerlane), mercilessly sacked and **plundered Delhi**. Timur returned to central Asia leaving his nominee to rule in the Punjab.

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THE SAYYID & LODHI DYNASTIES
(Continued)

The last, **Lodhi Ibrahim**, asserted his absolute power and did not consider the tribal feelings. This lead to his making enemies with them. Finally they plotted with **Babar** and succeeded in overthrowing him in 1526 at the **first battle of Panipat**.

As the power of the **Sultanate declined**, a number of other kingdoms arose.
In Western India - **Malwa** and **Gujarat**,
In Eastern India **- Jaunpur** and **Bengal**,
In Northern India - **Kashmir**, and
In the Deccan and the south - The **Vijayanagara** and the **Bahamani**.



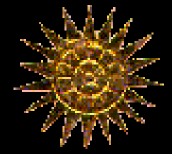
As the **Islamic population** in India swelled, the identity of the Indian Moslem acquired a **new definition**. Islam now actively influenced most facets of life. The Hindu elite adopted the **purdha** system and their language began to be written in **Arabic script**, leading to a new language, **Urdu**. **Calligraphy** came into its own and was raised to the highest form of aesthetic expression.

Around this time on the north-western part of India, especially around Punjab a new religion **Sikhism** started to gain popularity

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The Bahamanis (Continued)

Ferhishta - the court poet, calls him an orthodox Muslim, his only weakness being his fondness for drinking wine and listening to music. Firuz Shah was compelled to abdicate in favour of his brother **Ahmad Shah I**, who was called a saint (wali) on account of his association with the famous sufi **Gesu Daraz**. He invaded Warangal and annexed most of its territories.



The loss of Warangal changed the **balance of power** in south India. The Bahamani kingdom gradually extended and reached its climax under the prime ministership of **Mahmud Gawan** (1466 AD - 1481 AD). One of the most difficult problems which faced the Bahamanis was a strife among the nobles, who were **divided** into **Deccanis** (old-comers) and **Afaqis** or **gharibs** (new-comers).

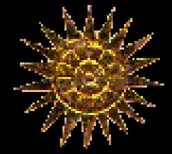
Since, Gawan was a new-comer, it was hard for him to win the confidence of the Deccanis. His broad policy of conciliation, could not stop the party strife. In 1482, Gawan who was over seventy years, was executed by Sultan **Muhammad Shah** of the Deccan.

After his death, the **party strife** became more intense and various governors became **independent** and were finally **divided** into five parts, namely, **Adil Shahi** of Bijapur, **Qutub Shahi** of Golconda, **Nizam Shahi** of Ahmadnagar, **Barid Shahi** of Bidar and **Imad Shahi** of Berar.

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The Mughals
(Continued)

Humayun (1530 AD - 1556 AD)
He **inherited** a vast unconsolidated empire and an empty treasury. He also had to deal with the growing power of the Afghan **Sher Shah**, from the east, who had Bihar and Bengal under him. Sher Shah defeated Humayun in **Kannauj** (1540 AD) and Humayun passed the next twelve years in exile. In 1555, after Sher Shah's death, Humayun regained the throne from his weak successor.



Akbar, his son, succeed him in 1556 AD, and consolidated the empire. He was such a good builder that the edifice he had erected lasted for another hundred years inspite of inadequate successors.

There was great subversion of **Indian culture**, in an effort to Islamicize it. Indian music was adopted as a whole and with enthusiasm by the Muslim Courts and the nobility. Literature and poetry were also encouraged and among the noted poets in Hindi some were Muslims. **Ibrahim Adil Shah**, the ruler of Bijapur, wrote a treatise in Hindi on Indian music.

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THE INITIAL STRUGGLE FOR INDEPENDENCE



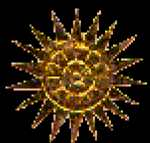
The **many changes** that Britain had brought about in the **administration** and the **ways of life** created considerable discontent; and there were many risings in various parts of the country from 1816 to 1857. This culminated in the **Revolt of 1857**, which **shook the very foundation** of the Company's rule in India.

After nearly a century of **British rule**, the spirit of revolt was growing, especially among the feudal chiefs and their followers. Even amongst the masses, discontent and an intense **anti-British** feeling was wide spread. In March 1857, the **Indian army** at **Barrackpore** mutinied and this **spread rapidly like a wildfire** and assumed the character of a **popular rebellion** and a war of **Indian independence**.

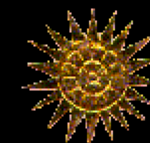
By 1857 the material for mass upheaval was **ready** and required only a **spark** to set it afire. The episode of **greased cartridges** provided this spark and the revolt was started by **Mangal Pande**. The greased cartridges which were to be chewed before firing contained fats of cow and pig. The cow was holy for Hindus where as pig was the most unholy animal for muslims.

Immediately the revolt engulfed North and Central India. On May 10, 1857 sepoys stationed at **Meerut mutinied** and marched to Delhi and proclaimed **Bahadur Shah Zafar**, the last Mughal Emperor, as the Emperor of India.

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HALL OF HEROES



Chattrapati Shivaji Maharaj

and the National Revival under the Marathas

by Sudheer Birodkar

The Marathas - Samurais from Western India

The Marathas are a proud and hardy race who are a sub-set of the wider Hindu Community. They are first mentioned in Indian history as the stout fighters in the army of the Chalukya King Pulikeshin who resisted the Southward march of Emperor Harsha in the 7th century C.E.



CHATTRAPATI SHRI SHIVAJI MAHARAJ

A statue of this great Saint Soldier seen against the backdrop of the fort of Raigad, which was his capital

The Maratha dynasties of the ancient (pre-Muslim) period are the **Chalukyas** (500 C.E. to 750C.E.), the Rastrakutas (750 C.E. to 978 C.E. and the Yadavas or Jadhavs (1175 C.E. to 1318 C.E.).

The Marathas were the first who crossed Malik Kafur's path, when he invaded the deccan in 1314 C.E. They were then led by the last scion of the Yadava dynasty - Ramdev Rai Yadava who ruled from Devagiri (today's Daulatabad). In their first clash with the Muslims; the Marathas lost to the invaders and accepted the status of being vassals and mercenaries of their **Muslim overlords**.

The Marathas before Shivaji were Mercenaries and revenue Collectors for the Muslim Rulers

In keeping with the feudal tradition, the Maratha Sardars (Generals), before Shivaji kept shifting their loyalties from one Muslim ruler to another. And there were many Muslim rulers like the Adilshahis at Bijapur, the Nizamshahis at Ahmednagar (Berar), the Qutubshahis at Golkonda (Hyderabad), etc.

Shahji Bhosale, who was Shivaji's father typified this practice of shifting loyalties from one Muslim overlord to another. He was from time-to-time in the service of the Mughals, the Adilshahis and the Nizamshahis. The thought of establishing an independent Maratha-Hindu kingdom, does seem to have crossed his mind, but he never really got about to doing it successfully. The germ of this idea however seems to have got rubbed into Shivaji - his son by Jijabai.

Shivaji Maharaj - the Visionary Saint-Soldier

Shivaji was born in the year 1627 at the Fort of Shivneri in Maharashtra in Western India. Shivaji's mother, Jijabai was a direct descendant of the erstwhile Yadav royal family of Devagiri. She seems to have nursed deep within her mind the idea of recovering independence from Muslim rule which her Yadav forebears had lost in the year 1318. Shivaji grew up with these ideas embedded into him. His childhood stories are those of playing games in which he and his friends attacked and captured forts held by the enemy.

The Oath of Independence - at Raireshwar

When Shivaji was seventeen, he decided to transform what were till then simply games to a reality. He and his friends encouraged by Jijabai and his Guru Dadoji Kondeo; decided to take a formal oath to free the country from the shackles of Muslim tyranny. This was done in the year 1645 in a dark cavern housing a small temple to the Hindu God Shiva (locally called Raireshwar).



At the cave temple of Raireshwar in the Sayhadris Shivaji and his select band of teenaged Maratha friends slit their thumbs and poured the blood oozing from it on the Shiva-linga (Phallus representing the Lord Shiva). By this act they declared a blood-feud against Mughal tyranny.

Here Shivaji and his select band of teenaged Maratha friends slit their thumbs and poured the blood oozing from it on the Shiva-linga (Phallus representing the Lord Shiva). By this act they declared a blood-feud against Mughal tyranny. This was the beginning of a long and arduous Maratha-Mughal struggle that went on for the next century and a half to culminate in the defeat of the Mughals and their replacement by the Marathas as the dominant power in India when the British came into the scene. (But more of the British later.)

Shivaji's encounter with Afzal Khan

When Shivaji started his military career by capturing the fortress of Torana, it sent shockwaves in the Adilshshi court at Bijapur. Here was a local Hindu chieftain, daring to challenge the might of a Muslim ruler. The retribution was swift and Adil Shah sent in his most fearsome general named Afzal Khan to bring back Shivaji dead or alive to Bijapur. Afzal Khan who was reputed to be more than six feet tall and of a real massive built, set on his mission and in order to lure Shivaji down into the plains, he destroyed the Hindu temples at Tuljapur, Pandharpur and Shikhar Shenganapur.

Afzal Goes Up to Pratapgad

This ploy failed to work and Shivaji stuck to his Hill fastness in the Sahyadris. Shivaji even sent a letter to Afzal Khan praising the legendary strength of Afzal Khan's powerful arms and his reputed fearlessness. Shivaji addressed him as his uncle and said that he was afraid to come down to meet Afzal Khan. Shivaji asked him to come up into the hills to meet him and on condition that Afzal Khan came with not more than few select soldiers. The proud Khan felt that the Dekkhan-Ka-Chuha (Rat of the Deccan as the Muslims scornfully addressed Shivaji) had really chickened out.

Afzal Meets his Nemesis in Shivaji

Khan-Saheb agreed to go up the hills at Pratapgad to meet his nemesis. When the meeting took place, Afzal Khan embraced Shivaji and with his diminutive enemy (Shivaji was less than five feet in height) in his grip, Afzal suddenly pulled out his dagger and tried to stab Shivaji. When Afzal's dagger could not plunge into Shivaji Maharaj due to the protective armour which Shivaji was wearing, Afzal tried to throttle him. But the wily Maratha was more than prepared for this as he had come down not only with full armour that was hidden by his thick satin robes, but he also had with him the 'Wagh Nakh' - a sharp weapon resembling tiger claws that could be hidden in the grip of one's fist. In addition, he had the Bichhwa - curved dagger hidden in the pocket of his waistcoat.



Shivaji Maharaj thrusts the Wagh-Nakh into Afzal's Abdomen when Afzal tried to stab and then throttle Shivaji Maharaj. Shivaji Maharaj emerged the victor in this battle of muscles and wits.

Jiwa Mahalaya

On sensing that the Khan meant to throttle him, Shivaji pierced the tiger claws deep into Khan's belly and pulled out his intestines. After which Shivaji repeatedly stabbed him with the bichhwa. The Khan bellowed "Daga" "Daga" and

yelled for Syed Banda, his bodyguard to come to his rescue. When Syed Banda, also a burly Muslim was about to strike Shivaji with his sword, Shivaji's bodyguard Jiva Mahalya struck off Banda's upraised arm in the air itself.



PRATAPGAD FORT

This fort was named after the "Pratap" (Act of Valour) of Shivaji Maharaj in slaying his assailant - Afzal Khan. This fort is located amdist lofty ranges of the Sahyadris which soar to a height of 4800 feet above the mean sea level. The fort is surrounded by deeply forested valleys which were ideal for guerilla warfare which the Marathas waged against the Muslims to lay the roots of the freedom struggle and of the Maratha empire.

Santaji Kawji

After this commotion, the bleeding Khan tried to make good his escape and rushed into his palanquin. As the palanquin bearers set off with the fleeing Khan, Santaji Kawji, another of Shivaji's select warriors cut-off the feet of the bearers and Khans' palanquin, with its load of Khansaab fell to the ground. Santaji Kawji, then finished off the task of sending Khan to his final resting place. Khan's army which was waiting in the valley was ruthlessly massacred by the Marathas who were hiding behind every crevice and bush in the densely wooded jungles around the Pratapgad fort. At the place where this encounter took place on 10th November 1659 between Shivaji Maharaj and the Khan, there stands today a Kabar (grave) erected by Shivaji for the departed Khan's soul to rest in peace.

Bijapur Stymied

The result of this dramatic encounter was that the Bijapur ruler panicked and after that never posed a serious threat to the growing Maratha power. The next Muslim power which Shivaji turned to was that of the Mughals. Here was the real challenge for Shivaji. The Bijapur rulers were a provincial power, while the Mughals were an power of imperial dimensions whose writ ran almost all over Northern India.

The Siege of Panhalgad

Despite this defeat, Bijapur's Adil Shah made one last attempt to check Shivaji by sending another general named Siddhi Jouhar against him. Siddhi besiged Panhalgad where Shivaji was camping. The seige went on for some months, from summer till the monsoons. But Shivaji Maharaj slipped out of Panhalgad and reached safely at Vishalgad.

The Brave Deed of Baji Prabhu Deshpande

It is during this escape that Baji Prabhu Deshpande held the pursuing enemy troops at a narrow pass called Ghod Khind. Baji Prabhu immortalized himself by laying down his life but ensured that his Master reached safely at Vishalgad. This narrow pass is today known as Pawan Khind i.e. a Holy Pass. Made holy by Baji Prabhu's memorably brave deed.

Encounter with Shaista Khan - Aurangzeb's Uncle

The next Khan to come down 'literally' before Shivaji was Shaista Khan. On hearing Shivaji's depredations, Aurangzeb was furious and wanted to desperately crush this infidel upstart. He sent his uncle maternal Shaista Khan with a large and powerful army to checkmate Shivaji.



SHIVAJI MAHARAJ

He set an example of religious tolerance in an age when conversion at the point of the sword was the norm. He defended the honour of womenfolk in an age when captured women of the enemy were considered to be the rightful property by their Muslim captors to be put in the Haram - concubine chamber. Shivaji Maharaj was way ahead of his times in his vision and mission.

But even this time the wily Maratha proved that brain was stronger than the brawn.

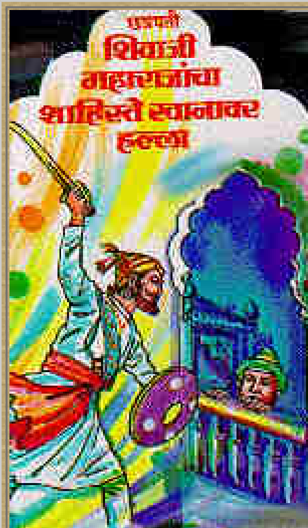
Shaista Khan came into Maharashtra and started devstating towns, villages fields, temples, forts and everything that came in his path.

Shaista Establishes his Harem in Shivaji's Devghar (Prayer Room)

To provoke Shivaji, Shaista Khan established his camp in Shivaji's home in Pune called Lal-Mahal. And to top it up, he put up his Harem in Shivaji's Devghar (prayer room).

Shaista is Lucky - He Only Loses His Fingers

Shivaji bided his time for many months and one on fine day (night), he with a select band of Maratha Samurais, sneaked into Pune and into the Lal-Mahal. He tracked down the sleeping Khan to his bed. The Khan sensing that his time was up tried jumping out of the window. At that point Shivaji cut off the Khan's fingers with which he was holding on to the window sill.



For all his belligerence, Shaista Khan proved to be a coward when he faced Shivaji Maharaj in person. The Khan, who was Aurang's (the Mughal Emperor) uncle miserably tried to jump out of the window when Shivaji Maharaj came for him!

On the Khan's wife's pleading before Shivaji to spare her husband's life as she considered Shivaji to be her brother. And so killing her husband would mean making her a widow, Shivaji spared the Khan's life. This was a mistake for which Shivaji was to pay dearly later. Shivaji made good his escape from the Khan's lair, but not before the treacherous Khan ordered his troops to give chase and try to capture the fleeing Shivaji.

Shaista's Retreat from Maharashtra

The Khan however, decided that enough was enough and returned to Delhi - without his fingers. This happened in April 1663

The failure of his uncle peeved Aurang to no end and he now sent another general to subjugate Shivaji. This was Mirza Raja Jai Singh, Aurangzeb's Hindu general who was also the scion of the house of the Suryavanshi Kachhawaha's who we saw earlier had ingratiated themselves to the Mughal rulers by giving away their daughters in marriage to the Mughal Padishah. (The Moghuls incidentally never returned the favour by giving, or even offerring, their daughters to the Rajputs!). This Mirza Raja Jaisingh who came with a powerful force was smarter than Shaista Khan sent earlier by Aurangzeb. Mirzaji laid siege to Purandar alongwith a systematic loot and destruction of rural Maharashtra.

The Brave Deed of Murar Baji

When Raja Jai Singh and his general Diler Khan laid siege to the Fort of Purandar. Murar Baji was the Maratha Fort Commandant at Purandar. To break the morale of the Maratha troops, Diler Khan launched a viscious attack on the fort and laid waste the surrounding countryside. The Mughals succeeded in forcing their way into the outer defenses of Purandar.

But the Marathas were not easily intimidated, they withdrew to the inner fort (bali-killa) and kept on their attack on the besieging Mughals. One day, Murar Baji decided to rain hell on the enemy and the Marathas stormed out of the fort and fell upon the Mughals who were occupying the outer fort. In face of the Maratha attack, the Mughals broke

ranks and fled to their main camp in the plains below, where Diler Khan was camping.

Seeing the ferocity of the Maratha attack, Diler Khan, decided to tempt Murar Baji with an offer of making him a general in the Mughal army if he betrayed Shivaji. When news of this offer reached Murar Baji, in the midst of the battle, his rage knew no bounds, and in a rash act he pushed into the ranks of the Mughal troops, hacking right, left and center towards Diler Khan and shouted at him that he would reply Diler's offer by cutting off his head and taking it to Shivaji Maharaj.

Murar Baji had left his own troops behind and was now surrounded by Mughal troops on all sides, but he could only see Diler, whose head he wanted. This act was brave but rash and cost Murar Baji his life. Their leader dead, the Marathas withdrew into the fort. The news of this battle and the passing away of Murar Baji and the long drawn siege along with the destruction of the countryside forced Shivaji to reach out for a compromise with Jai Singh in the interests of the sufferring population of Maharashtra.

The Treaty of Purandar

The treaty of Purandar signed between Mirza Raja Jai Singh and Shivaji Maharaj had among many conditions, one condition that Shivaji accompany Mirzaji to Agra. Shivaji decided to go to Agra in 1666.



A Maratha Gunpowder Keg. Shivaji Maharaj not only fought for independence, but strived to preserve it. He created a ministry of Military Affairs in his eight ministerial cabinet (Asta-Pradhan Mandal).His Minister of Warfare was Hambirrao Mohite. Shivaji Maharaj established factories at Raigad and at other important forts for the manufacture of guns and gunpowder.

Shivaji's Visit to Aurangzeb at Agra

At Agra, when Shivaji presented himself at the Moghul court, Aurangzeb deliberately insulted him by making him stand behind a lesser noble whom Shivaji has once defeated in battle. This was a calculated humiliation that Aurang had arranged for Shivaji. As a result Shivaji left the court in a huff. This gave Aurangzeb an excuse to declare Shivaji of having committed the offence of insulting the Mughal court.

Imprisonment of Shivaji

Aurangzeb detained Shivaji in Mirza Raja Jai Singh's house where Shivaji had put up. Shivaji seems to have read Aurangzeb's mind of having him put to death. Aurag had made plans to shift Shivaji into the proper Mughal dungeons.

Shivaji's Escape from Aurang's Clutches

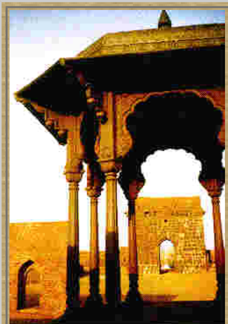
Shivaji struck upon an idea and said that he wanted to make peace with God by sending fruit and sweetmeats to Brahmins and holy men. To this Aurangzeb consented. One fine day Shivaji and his son Sambhaji hid himself in two of the sizable baskets in which fruits and sweetmeats had been packed everyday and made good their escape from Aurnag's custody. In doing this Shivaji must have had in mind what had happened to his general Netaji Palkar who after being captured by the Mughals had been forced to embrace Islam and change his name to Quli Mohammed Khan. Netaji was forced to serve as a Mughal soldier in Afghanistan, till he too made good his escape and returned to Shivaji to reconvert to Hinduism and join the forces of Swaraja once again. Others were not so lucky, they were made to convert to Islam and some others were simly tortured to death - as was to happen later with Shivaji's son Shambhu Raje or Sambhaji, ater Shivaji's death.



Shivaji Maharaj's Seal. Shivaji Maharaj was the first Hindu King to ascend a throne after a long time. During the Dark Days of Muslim Tyranny, Shivaji Maharaj was one of the very few (along with the Ranas of Mewad), to issue his own coinage. Shivaji's coinage was in Sanskrit. The coins were in two main denominations, the Shivrai made of copper was a lower denomination coin and the Hon was a gold coin of a higher denomination. To erase the memory of Shivaji Maharaj, Aurangzeb issued an order after the passing away of Shivaji Maharaj that all Hons were to be imponded and melted. That Aurang did not succeed in erazing Shivaji Maharaj's illustruous personality from our memory is another matter.

Coronation of Shivaji as Chattrapati

After returning to the deccan, Shivaji again raised an army and recaptured all the forts that he had been made to surrender to the Mughals as per the treaty of Purandar. In this phase we see the exploits of his brave general Tanaji Malusare who perished while recapturing the invincible fort of Kondana from Uday Bhan - the renegade Rajput who was the Mughal commandant of the fort. After all the forts had been recaptured, Shivaji was pursuaded by Gaga Bhatt (a brahmin from Benaras) and his mother the ageing Jijabai to formally crown himself as the king of the Marathas. The coronation took place at Raigad on the 6th of June 1674.



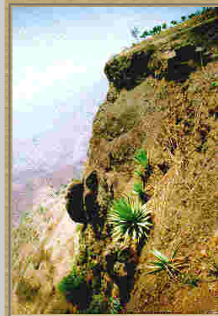
THE ORIGINAL CHATTRI OF SHIVAJI MAHARAJ AT RAIGAD FORT
This is the Coronation place of Shivaji Maharaj, from which we have the title Chattrapati.

Narvir Tanaji's Impossibly Brave Deed

The fort of Kondana, which is today on the outskirts of Pune town was then an outpost overlooking Pune and the surrounding countryside. It was strategically placed in the center of a string of forts of Rajgad, Purandar, and Torna. The capture of Kondana was necessary if Shivaji Maharaj was to re-establish de facto control over the Pune region.

Recognizing the strategic importance of Kondana, the Mughals had maintained a battalion of 5000 troops led by Udai Bhan, a relative of Mirza Raja Jai Singh. The fort was built in such a way that all its approaches were covered by cannon-fire. Only on turret was not well defended as it was at the top of a vertical overhanging cliff.

Tanaji decided that this was the only way, he could enter the fort. He dressed himself as a Gondhali (devotee of the Goddess Bhavani of Tuljapur) and roamed the surrounding villages. He won the trust of one Mahadev Koli who was in the service of Udai Bhan. Koli presented the disguished Tanaji to Udai Bhan, who was suitably impressed by this "devotee" and allowed him free access to the fort.



THE GHORPAD CLIFF

**This is the sheer cliff
that Tanaji and his brave Mavalas (comrades) scaled to surprise the Muslim army that was engrossed in a drunken orgy on the plateau seen at the top during a dark night in 1669.**

Tanaji carried out a careful surveillance of the fort and at that very night when he was told that at the overhanging cliff Udai Bhan and all his senior commanders would be celebrating a usual party with an alcohol and dance orgy; Tanaji decided that he should seize this opportunity.

With almost all his troops, Udai Bhan had a roaring party on top of the overhanging cliff. Unknown to them after midnight, Tanaji and his brave followers who numbered 300 scaled the cliff using ropes tied to a reptile called Ghorpad. The Ghorpad can stick fast to any surface and a number of adults can use this force to scale a vertical cliff with the help of a rope, one end of which is tied to the Ghorpad. Silently Tanaji and his comrades slunk up to the top of the cliff.

On the other side his uncle Shelar Mama and his brother Suryaji had moved close to the other gates of the forts with another 300 Mavalas (Maratha Soldiers). On a signal from Tanaji, all his comrades who has taken up strategic position all round the celebrating Mughal army, broke into the party and mercilessly fell upon their enemies. They started slaughtering the surprised and ill-prepared and drunken Muslim soldiers.

When Udai Bhan saw that Tanaji - the leader of this invading band of Marathas was no other than the devotee whom he had given permission to visit the fort, he flew into a mad rage. On seeing Tanaji, Udai Bhan rushed at him and we are told that for a few fatal seconds, Tanaji started dancing in the same fashion as he had done as a Gondhali (devotee) when he had met Udai Bhan earlier in the day. The enraged Udai Bhan lunged at dancing Tanaji and cut off the arm with which Tanaji was holding his shield. But undaunted Tanaji used his turban to ward off further thrusts from the blade of Udai Bhan's sword and continued fighting him for 2 hours in this state with his wristless left arm bleeding profusely. ***It is for this feat of Tanaji, that he is called Narvir - Brave amongst Men.***At

the end of this ordeal, the exhausted Tanaji fell to a fatal swish of Udai Bhan's sword. But Udai Bhan too was throttled by Shelar Mama and thus lost his life.



NARVIR TANAJI's CHATTRI (MONUMENT)
This is the Monument erected at Simhagad by Shivaji Maharaj in memory of a brave soldier who laid down his life for National Independence.
On this event Shivaji Maharaj is said to have said on this occasion "Gad aala, paan Simha gela" (We have won the fort but have lost the Lion - Tanaji).
The fort of Kondana was renamed as "Sinhagad" in honour of Tanaji's brave deed.

Shivaji Maharaj is said to have said on this occasion "Gad aala, paan Simha gela" (We have won the fort but have lost the Lion - Tanaji). The fort of Kondana was renamed as "Sinhagad" in honour of Tanaji's brave deed.

A "Nazarana" - The Daughter-in-law of the Muslim Subahdar of Kalyan

During the days after the coronation, many Maratha generals presented Nazaranas (tribute in kind) to the newly anointed King of Maharashtra. It was then a practice of the Muslims to abduct any fair maiden and to force her into the harem as a concubine. (A harem is a term for the living quarters of abducted women, nominally treated as wives.) On one such occasion, following the "illustrious" example set by the Muslim aggressors, a Maratha Sardar also (general) abducted a daughter-in-law of the Muslim Subahadar of Kalyan, near Mumbai (Kalyan was then under Mughal occupation).

THE TEMPLE OF KHANDOBA AT JEJURI

This was one of the many temples that had been destroyed and converted into a Mosque by the Muslim aggressors Shivaji Maharaj reconverted it into a temple. Even today, the temple structure displays a mix



of Hindu and Muslim architecture. But in spite of the trying circumstances of religious bigotry of the Muslim aggressors in which he operated, Shivaji Maharaj never disrespected the Muslim faith. Whenever a copy of the holy Koran fell into the hands of Maratha troops, Shivaji Maharaj had given strict instructions to treat it with utmost respect and hand it over to the local Maulavis (Muslim priests).

This Sardar presented this "Nazarana" to Shivaji Maharaj, expecting to be patted on the back for such a "fair" tribute. Shivaji Maharaj's reaction at this occasion, gives us an insight into the mind of the person who lived 300 years before us. Shivaji not only chided the general, but warned him and all the other Maratha generals that such a heinous offence would henceforth attract a penalty of the offender's hands being chopped off. The dazed general was asked by Shivaji to return with full honours, the daughter-in-law of the Muslim Subahadar of Kalyan.

The Maratha ballads (Povadas) that describe this event say that on hearing Shivaji's dialogue in Marathi the teenaged girl is said to have exclaimed "Ya Allah, yeh aadmi nahin farishta hai. Ees farishtey pe kamyaabi bahal karna." ("O Lord, this is not an ordinary man but an angel. Bestow success on this angel.") The Maratha balladeers, while narrating this event say that "Asseech amuchi aai asatee,sundar roopavati; amhi hee sundar zhalo asato - vadaley Chattrapati" ("If my mother had been as beautiful, I too would have been as beautiful - exclaimed Chattrapati"). These dialogues might as well be a later romanticization of what actually happened. But it proves a point - Shivaji Maharaj had risen above the attitudes of religious bigotry, and beastly behaviour that had come to typify the Indian ruling class under Muslim rule.

Karnataka and Tamil Nadu Campaigns of Shivaji

After this Shivaji launched his campaign in Karnatak, which took him up to Thanjavur in Tamil Nadu. The period from 1674 up his passing away in 1680 was a relatively peaceful period, as the Mughal made no more attempts to molest the Marathas. Only after the passing away of Shivaji Maharaj did Aurang again dared to venture into Maharashtra, and then too he did not entrust the task to any general. He came himself in 1682 and stayed on in the deccan till his death in 1707.

The Marathas After Shivaji Maharaj - Sambhaji

After the passing away of their illustrious leader, the marathas fell into relative disarray. Shivaji's eldest son Sambhaji did not prove adequate to the responsibility of preserving the flame of independence to which his father had given the initial spark. Sambhaji was extremely fearless and brave. Maratha chronicles (Bakhars) refer to him as in fact more assertive and independent than his father. But in addition to all this Sambhaji also had vices like wine and women. In his eventful life, Shivaji Maharaj did not seem to have had enough time to groom his

successor. Sambhaji's temper had a short fuse. During Shivaji's life-time itself, he had once quarreled with his father and had gone over to join the Mughals as one of their Mansabdars. Subsequently, he realized his folly and came back to his father and repented. But this act of his deeply hurt his father nad also displayed his chimerical nature for which he was to pay later with a painful death.



Another view of the Khandoba Temple at Jejuri

- Khandoba, the deity at Jejuri is the fighter God of the Marathas. He is shown astride a horse and has a angry warlike look. This was reason enough for the Muslims to repeatedly destroy the temple. Even Aurangzeb attempted to destroy the temple a second time in 1690. He however was thwarted in this attempt when a nest of hornets was disturbed by the Mughal soldiers while trying to attack the temple. The hornets so harrassed the besieging Mughal soldiers that Aurangzeb was forced to lift the siege and spare the temple. The Bigoted but God-fearing Aurangzeb is said to have placated the angry bees by offering One Hundred and Twenty Five Thousand Silver Coins to the God Khandoba. Even today this place is known as Sava Lakhacha Bhunga.

After the death of Shivaji Maharaj, Sambhaji was crowned as Chattrapati. He brazenly followed policies detrimental to the fledgling Maratha power. In this he was given short-sighted advise by his friend Kavi Kalash.

Sambhaji's Assassination

Sambhaji did not falter in battling the Mughals, as well as the Portuguese. In those days Aurnagzeb had come over to the Deccan. After subjugating the Bijapur and Golkonda kingdoms, he turned his attention on the Marathas. He carried on a ceaseless campaign against the Marathas. Sambhaji performed many daring acts in this guerrilla campaign especially in the Konkan region. But in spite of his bravery, his short temper and his vices went against him. One night, when he was passing thru Sangmeshwar with a small band of bodygaurds, he was waylaid by the Mughals and was brought in chains before Aurangzeb.

On being presented to Aurabgzeb, Sambhaji was asked to surrender all his forts, accept Islam and enter the service of the Mughal Emperor. To this affront, Sambhaji scronfully replied that he could consider this if Aurangzeb gave him his daughter in marriage and proclaimed him as the successor to the Mughal throne! On hearing this Aurang flew into a rage and decided to torture Sambhaji to death. Sambhaji's eyes were gouged, his tongue was cut off, followed by his arms and legs. Sambhaji died an inhuman death, but till the agonizing end he never recanted his faith.

Rajaram, Tarabai and Shahu

After Sambhaji's assassination, his step-brother Rajaram became the king. He was not especially brave and is said to have been physically weak. During his time Aurangzeb besieged and captured Raigad. Instead of fighting the enemy, Rajaram fled from Raigad when the fort was about to be besieged. Raigad fell into the hands of the Mughals in 1689 when a renegade Maratha called Suryaji Pisal betrayed the defences of the fort to the besieging

Mughals. During the capture of Raigad, Sambhaji' wife Yesubai and his son Shahu were taken captive by the Mughals. Rajaram's life as Chattrapati was spent mostly in fleeing from the Mughal armies. Nevertheless during his times, the generals like Santaji Ghorpade and Dhanaji Jadhav carried out a whirlwind guerrilla campaign to harras the Mughal army and never let Aurangzeb rest in one place. Thus in spite of his presence in the Deccan for more than 25 years from 1680 to 1707, Aurang could not subsume the flame of independence lit by Shivaji Maharaj.



A View from the Turrets of Raigad Fort
This fort was invincible.
After the passing away of Shivaji Maharaj in 1680, the fort could be captured by Aurangzeb in 1689 only when Suryaji Pisal - a renegade Maratha, betrayed the defenders and opened the doors secretly to let the enemy troops inside at night.

In 1700, Rajaram died of sickness and he was succeeded by his wife Tarabai. She was the nominal leader of the Marathas from 1700 to 1707, although the military activities were coordinated by the duo of Santaji and Dhanaji.

Aurang's Death in 1707

When Aurang died in 1707, his son Azamshah who was with him at his deathbed, proclaimed himself the Mughal Emperor and prepared to battle his elder brother Muaazam, who was then in Kabul. To ensure that the Marathas came over to his side, Azamshah released Shahu who was till then held as a prisoner by the Mughals. Shahu had been a prisoner for 18 years from 1689 up to 1707. When Shahu staked his claim to the throne, Tarabi was ruling. A battle between the two was inevitable. This battle fought at Khed went in favour of Shahu and he became the Chattrapati. He was incidentally the last de facto Chattrapati of the Marathas.

The Coronation of Shivaji Maharaj marked the zenith of a



career full of daring acts of personal bravery of this unique personality.

Prime Ministers Peshwas become de facto Kings

During the days of Shahu, his general Dhanaji Jadhav had a very able accountant named Balaji Vishwanath Bhatt. This accountant rose in Dhanaji's favour by dint of hard work. His successful track record brought him visibility in the eyes of Shahu.

On Dhanaji's passing away, Shahu appointed him as his accountant. During this period, Shahu was attacked by forces loyal to Tarabai. To face this attack, Shahu appointed Balaji Viswanath Bhatt as a Senakarta (i.e. Commander). Balaji Viswanath proved to be an able soldier too. This increased the confidence Shahu had in him and he appointed Balaji Viswanath as his representative to negotiate with Kanhoji Angre, the Admiral of the Maratha Navy, who was at that time with Shahu's rival Tarabai. Before, balaji Viswanath could take up this assignment, he asked Shahu to appoint him as a Prime Minister or Peshwa. To this request Shahu conceded and Balaji Vishwanath Bhatt became the Chattrapati's first Peshwa.

Balaji negotiated with Kanhoji Angre and both consented to accept the other's independent sphere of influence. With Balaji Vishwanath in charge of the Maratha military and Kanhoji in charge of the Marathas Navy. This agreement set the course for Balaji Viswanatha's rise as a Peshwa during his subsequent visit to Delhi with an army of 12,000 Marathas. During this visit to Delhi, on an invitation from the Syed brothers in their struggle with the Mughal Emperor Farrukhsiyyar, the Maratha forces led by Balaji Viswanath clashed with the forces of Mughal Emperor and defeated them. This was the first Maratha victory over the Mughals in Delhi. This event marks the asendency of the Marathas in Delhi an asendency that was to last for almost a century till they were supplanted by the British in 1803.

The Peshwas - Baji Rao, Balaji Baji Rao, Madhav Rao

As we saw above, after Shahu, the de facto executive power passed into the hands of the hereditary Prime Ministers the Peshwas. Balaji Viawanath Bhatt was succeeded by his son Baji Rao the first. Baji Rao was a very able and ambitious soldier and he was the one who consolidated Maratha power in North India.



The Spread of the Maratha Empire.

The Marathas rose to the status of Imperial Rulers of India. Their rise from freedom fighters for swarajya to the rulers of Marathi Daulat (Empire) took place from 1720 to 1761 and lasted till 1803 when they were supplanted by the British.

Baji Rao died at a relativey young age of 40 in the year 1740. His was succeeded by his son Balaji Baji Rao. Balaji Baji Rao played a tragic role in Maratha history and the fissiparous tendencies he let loose ultimately let to the downfall of the Maratha empire.

His first mistake was to go back on the agreement between his grandfather Balaji Viswanath Bhatt and Kanhoji Angre according to which the Peshwa was to have no direct control over the Maratha Navy. He attacked the his own navy and weakened one arm of the Maratha might.

During his rule, North India was invaded by Ahmed Shah Abdali first in 1756. Balaji Baji Rao then sent his brother Raghunath Rao along with Malharrao Holkar to defeat Abdali. Raghunath rao not only defeated Abdali but chased him up to the Khyber pass till Attock in Paktoonistan. .

This success of Raghunath Rao aroused the jealousy of Balaji Baji Rao's wife Gopikabai, who started conspiring against Raghunath Rao to undermine his influence. This led to corresponding jealousy from Anandibai who was Ragunath Rao's wife. The unfortunate fallout of this court intrigue ws to end in the disastrous 3rd battle of Panipat in 1761.Let us see the event that led to this catastrophe at Panipat.

The Persian Invasion of 1740 by Nadir Shah

Some 80 years after Shivaji when the Mughal Empire had been weakened by repeated Maratha attacks, the Afghan raider Ahmed Shah Durrani (Abdali) invaded North India. As the Mughals were past their prime and were now living at the mercy of the Marathas, they did not dare oppose Ahmed Shah. The task of challenging him was left to the Marathas. The Marathas who then were on their ascendancy in North India had since the first Persian-Afghan

invasion by Nadir Shah, the king of Persia in 1740, established themselves as a dominant power in Northern India. The 20 years from 1740 to 1760 saw a see-saw battle between the Afghans and the Marathas for the domination of North India.

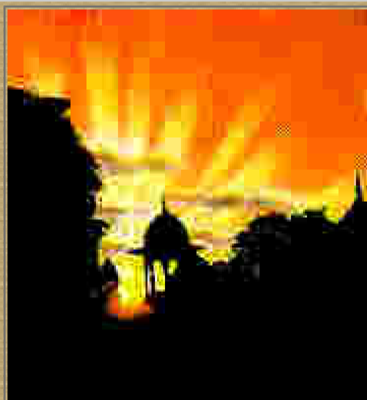
With the defeat of Mohammed Shah, the Moghul Emperor in 1740 by Nadir Shah (in whose army Ahmed Shah Abdali was a general), the Mughal power steadily declined and its place was usurped by the Rohillas who were led by an ambitious and ruthless chieftain named Najib Khan. Najib's ambition was to supplant the Moghal Emperor and crown himself as the ruler of India by capturing Delhi.

The Marathas Liberate Punjab

But the growing power of the Marathas in their northward expansion, stood between Najib and his ambition. To overcome the Marathas, in 1755, Najib invited Ahmed Shah Abdali from Afghanistan to help him in defeating the Marathas and crown himself the ruler of India. In this, he was thwarted by the Marathas who decisively defeated the Rohillas and Afghans near Delhi in 1756. The defeat was so decisive that Najib Khan surrendered to the Marathas and became their prisoner. The Maratha forces were led by Shrimant Raghunath Rao and Malhar Rao Holkar.

After defeating the Afghan-Rohilla forces, the Marathas pursued the Afghans into the Punjab and beyond up to the Khyber pass. The last frontier of the Marathas was at Attock in today's NWFP (or Paktoonistan) on the Afghan border. (This campaign of the Marathas led by Shrimant Raghunath Rao is called as Raghu's Bharari - i.e. whirlwind campaign.

Thus after nearly 800 after the last Punjabi King Tirlochan Pal Shahi had been defeated by Mahmud of Ghazni in 1020 C.E. did that part of India come under Indian rule in 1756 due to the liberation of Punjab by the Marathas.



The Dawn of Swarajya

**Shivaji Maharaj gave hope
to the people of Maharashtra in particular and of India in general by his dream of Hindavi Swaraj.
Maratha Rule gave Indians a sense of self-confidence in themselves
apart from the relief from brutal Muslim Tyranny.**

Meanwhile with machinations and trickery, Najib Khan won over Malhar Rao Holkar and secured his release. On his release Najib started to undermine the Marathas once again and treacherously killed Dattaji Shinde (eldest brother of Mahadji Shinde). Najib continued to battle the Shindes in 1757-58 and with his newly found confidence again invited Ahmed Shah Abdali to invade India.

PANIPAT - A Result of Court Intrigues at Pune

The court intrigues at Shaniwarwada in Pune between Gopikabai (Peshwa Balaji Baji Rao's wife) and Anandibai (Raghunath Rao's wife) led to the sidetracking of Raghunath Rao in favour of the Peshwas cousin, Sadashiv Rao Bhau (along with Viswas Rao the Peshwa's son and successor) as the Supreme commander of the Maratha forces that were to give battle to Abdali a second time. It was unfortunate for the Marathas, that due to rivalries, a successful commander like Raghunath Rao was bypassed in favour of another general.



Had the Battle of Panipat been won by the Marathas, it would have changed the subsequent history of India and perhaps if there had been more astute rulers like Shrimant Thorle Madhav Rao, India's development might have resembled that of the Asian miracle nation - Japan. (This conjecture is based on the assumption of a strong domestic political power with a corollary of wise economic policy to encourage industrial growth as happened in Japan.)

The 3rd Battle of Panipat

When Abdali launched his second invasion in 1759 the Marathas who after their successes in 1756 had been hibernating in Maharashtra and Central India again woke up and in alliance with the Jat King Suraj Mal of Bharatpur formed an alliance. This alliance led by Shrimant Sadshiv Rao Bhau and Shrimant Vishwas Rao (the Peshwa Shrimant Balaji Baji Rao's son) won spectacular victories and captured Delhi and Kunjapura (where the Afghan treasury and armoury was located). Here the alliance developed cracks due to the Maratha insistence on not allowing the Jats to loot Delhi. This ultimately split the alliance and Suraj Mal withdrew from the alliance. The Marathas consequently marched upto Panipat, but instead of continuing their attacks to completely defeat the partly defeated Abdali and Najib Khan, they stayed put at Panipat, blocking the way of the Afghans back to Afghanistan. Seeing their way back to their homeland blocked, the Afghans now became restless. They in turn, decided to block the way of the Marathas back into the Deccan.

Stand-off for one year

This stand-off continued for one whole year from the 14th of January 1760 up to the 14th of January 1761. This led

to the fall in the morale of the stranded Marathas and ultimatley led to their defeat at Panipat. The Marathi term "Sankrant Kosalali" meaing "Sankranth has befallen us" comes from this event. During this stand-off the Afghans cut-off all supplies to the huge Maratha army. The Afghans with Najib Khan meanwhile also recaptured Delhi and Kunjpura. On the decisive day of 14th January 1761 (Makar Sankranti), the Marathas decided to break-through the Afghan blockade and re-enter Deccan. The disastrous battle saw about one hundred thousand Maratha troops being slaughtered in a matter of eight hours. But the Afghans too suffered heavy losses and decided enough was enough and went back to Afghanistan never to return to India.

The defeat of the Marathas and the withdrawal of the Afghans created a power vacuum in North India in the period 1761-1790. It was this vacuum that was filled up by the rising British power. But more of this later.



The Peshwa Shrimant Madhav Rao the first, receiving a petition from a representative of the British. Madhav Rao, was the last of the astute Maratha rulers. His rule in the post-Panipat phase consolidated the weakening Maratha power which was to result in the initial Maratha successes against the British at the Battle of Talegaon in 1782 (1st Anglo-Maratha War) and at the Battle of Assaye (2nd Anglo-Maratha War) some years later.

The Sikhs meanwhile united under the leadership of Maharaja Ranjit Singh and carried on the unfinished task of the Marathas. The Sikh general Jussa Singh Ahluwalia invaded Abdali's kingdom, defeated Abdali ignominiously and captured his capital city of Kabul. The saffron flag (Nishan Saheb) then fluttered over Kabul after a gap of 800 years after Raja Jaya Pal Shahi lost the city to Sabuktagin in 980 C.E.



Mahadji Shinde was the most successful Maratha General of the post-Panipat phase. He not only overcame the Rohillas under Najib Khan and the Nawab of Oudh, but even the Mughal Emperor became a pensioner of Mahadji and received an annual pension from him. Mahadji collected Chauth from all over North India in the period 1761 to 1790. He even checkmated the British who had to concede dominion over north India to him under the Treaty of Salbai.

Mahadji Shinde

Meanwhile in India proper, in the period between 1761 and 1790, the Maratha power was consolidated by Mahadji Shinde, Nana Phadnavis and Shrimant Madhav Rao Peshwa. Mahadji Shinde took initiative in military matters and he successfully checked the British in the first Anglo-Maratha war. Later of course, the Marathas were to succcumb to the British in after the third Anglo-Maratha war of 1817.



Nana Phadnavis was machiavellian minister of the Peshwa Shrimant Madhav Rao. He played a crucial role in the defeat of the British in the first Anglo-Maratha War at Talegaon 1782 that resulted in the Treaty of Salbai between the Marathas and the British.

Maratha Rule did not Change the Feudal Relations of Production and Distribution

But as far as changing the feudal economic relations were concerned, the Maratha rule did nothing. The feudal relations remained intact. Politically speaking too, the Maratha intermission from around 1720 to 1790 was too brief a period and though the writ of the Marathas ran in the whole of western India with parts of the north and south under their domination they could not bring the entire country uniformly under their rule. And in those parts of the country they ruled, the feudal relations did not undergo any fundamental change apart from the abolition of the Jazia penal tax levied on the Hindus by the Muslim rulers and general freedom from religious persecution of petty Muslim chieftains and representative of the Muslim monarchy based at Delhi.



The Statue of Chattrapati Shivaji Maharaj at Shivaji Park in Mumbai. The spirit of Shivaji Maharaj continues to motivate the people even today.

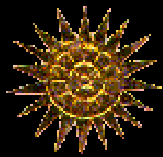
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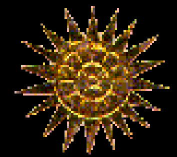








MODERN MURDER



MODERN MURDER
1947 PARTITION
KASHMIR
PAKISTAN
BANGLADESH
INDIA
SRI LANKA
TIBET
THE ROMA
WORLWIDE

HOME PAGE
A HISTORY
HALL OF HEROES
HALL OF SHAME
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Hindu Genocide in Tripura

S. Aravindan Neelakandan

"I came not to bring peace, but a sword" Jesus Christ

For seven-year-old Shreema, 13th Jan 2002 was a special Sunday. All through the year, the girl had awaited the dawn of this day. For, that was the day one goes out and purchases new clothes, new toys and sweets, as the next day would be *Makar Sankranthi* -- the harvest festival celebrated throughout India. The Singicherra Bazar was bustling with activity. Like Shreema's family there were many people looking forward to a happy Makar Sankranthi. But they didn't realise that they were violating a *fatwa* issued by the Baptist Church-created Christian Al-Qaeda, the National Liberation Front of Tripura (NLFT). Nor did they know that they would pay with their lives for celebrating a heathen festival of their motherland.

Shreema would never again celebrate Makar Sankranthi. She died, along with sixteen others, on the spot as 13 terrorists of the NLFT encircled the people shopping for the festival and fired indiscriminately[1]. The soldiers of Christ have done again in Tripura what they have been doing for centuries to heathens throughout the world.

The Baptist Church of Tripura is not just the ideological mentor of the NLFT; it also supplies the NLFT with arms and ammunition for the soldiers of the holy crusade[2]. Never mind that the holy war involves killing infants and torching the huts of 'heathen Hindoos'. The NLFT does all these to bring to the infidels the peace and love of Christ. So, when Nagmanlal Halam, secretary of the Noapara Baptist Church in Tripura, was arrested by the Tripura police he had rather curious tools for evangelisation, which included along with the gospel 50 gelatin sticks, 5 kg of potassium and 2 kg of sulphur and other ingredients for making explosives. Mr. Halam confessed that his activities for the saving the heathen souls involved buying and supplying explosives to the NLFT over the past two years. Another church official, Jatna Koloi, who was also arrested, admitted that he received training in guerrilla warfare at an NLFT base last year. Surely, gelatin and AK-47s have more efficiency when it comes to bringing the light of the only revealed truth to the disbelievers suffering in 'spiritual darkness'. Those who are in doubt can check it out with another great light-bearer of the other 'only true book', Osama bin Laden (that is, when and if the prophet of terror is captured).

The Baptist Church of Tripura was initially set up by proselytizers from New Zealand 60 years ago. Despite their efforts, even until 1980, only a few thousand people in Tripura had converted to Christianity. Then the Church used one of its most efficient and time-tested weapons of evangelisation -- creating racial and ethnic divide among the people. In the aftermath of one of the worst ethnic riots, engineered by the Church[3], the NLFT was born -- but not without the midwife

role of the Baptist Church. From its very inception, the NLFT has been advancing the cause of Christianity through armed persuasion. Every trace of indigenous culture is being eliminated through violent means. Every resisting group is made to bleed its way to extinction.

The case of Jamatya tribals provides a telling example. These tribals have strong spiritual leaders and a network of social service organisations headed by their religious leaders. These indigenous sects are neither exclusive nor expansionist. The Baptist Church has always failed miserably in its conversion efforts with regard to this well-knit community. Hence, it is no wonder that the NLFT has made Jamatya institutions and their religious leaders the targets of their attacks. In the August of 2000, religious leaders of the Jamatya community like Jaulushmoni Jamatya and Shanti Kumar Tripura were killed by the NLFT, and Jamatya families were uprooted from their homelands and made refugees. The death threats issued by the NLFT to the inmates of these institutions have already forced the closure of 11 Jamatya institutions like schools and orphanages, set up by the slain religious leaders in various parts of Tripura[4]. Interestingly, these tribals are not close-minded fanatics. For one thing, they do not mind teaching the theory of evolution in their schools.

The greatest challenge to the Bible inspired mission of the NLFT comes from the Sangh Parivar's Banbasi Kalyan Kendra. The dedicated life workers of RSS have started empowering the tribals by running many educational institutions which while empowering them through imparting secular technical education also retain their tribal cultural and spiritual identity. Rather than making them disown their roots, the Kendra made the tribals feel proud of their culture. It even conducts national level tribal sports festivals. If the NLFT is to carve out a kingdom for Christ out of the secular republic of India, it has to make sure that the Kendra activities are stopped at all costs. In July 2000, armed NLFT militants torched a residential school and students hostel run by the Seva Mission in the remote Ananda Bazar area of North Tripura[5]. They had also taken hostage four RSS life workers. These RSS workers were all in their sixties. The crime committed by these old men was that they had dared to run educational institutions for tribals while preserving the tribals' culture. Later, all four were killed by the NLFT.

The NLFT has been an active partner of the Baptist Church in winning converts to the Christian creed. They have killed tribal priests to threaten communities and effect mass conversions. But those tactics have obviously backfired. In 2001 alone, the NLFT killed more than 20 Hindus who refused to 'accept the love of Christ'. They also torched to death a Hindu family sleeping in a hut[6]. In 2001, community chiefs and religious heads of 19 tribes formed the 'Tribal Culture Protection Committee' to counter the threat posed by the NLFT[7]. Despite the NLFT taking all possible steps to enforce conversions, the conversions are still slow. Frustrated, the NLFT has now begun an all out war against Hindu tribals. They have issued *fatwas* against infidel activities. These *fatwas* prohibit people from celebrating festivals like *Durga Pooja* and *Makar Sankranthi*, listening to Indian music, watching Indian TV channels and films, and prohibit women from wearing bangles or sporting *bindis*, etc. Just a year before the NLFT started all these atrocities in India, the Southern Baptist Church of the United States of America had given a clarion call to bring the light of the gospel to millions of Hindus and Jews lost in the darkness of their religions[8].

Shreema, the seven-year-old girl from Tripura, died with bullets pumped into her tender body. Her

crime was that she violated the Christian *fatwa* which prohibited her from celebrating an Indian festival. She was not just a victim of barbaric terrorism but she is also a martyr for Indian culture, a culture that has preserved thousands of tribal customs from barbaric persecution. Yet, she will not make it to the glossy covers of the weekly magazines of English speaking Indian media. Unsubstantiated, fabricated stories of Hindu fundamentalists (an oxymoron) killing Christian priests have been making their headlines. However, these fabrications have their use. They do help in the covering up of such acts of Christian love like killing in cold blood a seven-year-old girl or burning a family to death.

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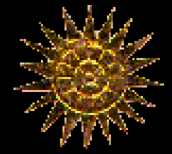
About S. Aravindan Neelakandan: *Aravindan is 31 years old and interested in the philosophy of science. He is working as Computer Programmer at S.T. Hindu College, Nagercoil, Kanyakumari district, Tamil Nadu. A post-graduate in Economics, Aravindan has been actively involved in NGO activities related to rural women/youth empowerment. He has a special interest in studying missionary strategies and conversion tactics. Aravindan's philosophical inclinations are not yet concretized but are towards monism and pantheism, and he strongly holds that the idea of Personal God will inevitably lead to violence.*

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THE TURKISH INVASION
(Continued)

Mahmud of Ghazni

Mahmud of Ghazni raided the country in 1000 AD, with his first great victory against the **Hindushahi** kings of Peshawar. The **muslim rulers** of Multan were the second targets. In a short period of 25 years, he is said to have made **17 raids** into India. From the Punjab, Mahmud raided Nagarkot in the Punjab hills and Thanesar near Delhi.



Somnath Temple

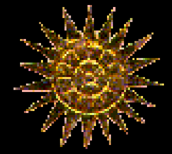
His most daring raids, however, were against Kanauj in 1018 and against the fabulously rich **Somnath temple** in Gujarat. No attempt was made to annex any of these areas. The rich spoils from the temples, which were **repositories of wealth**, helped him to consolidate his rule and embellish Ghazni with **palaces** and **mosques**. He died in Ghazni in 1030.

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THE MAMLUK (SLAVE) DYNASTY
(Continued)

During his last years, Iltutmish finally nominated his daughter **Raziya** (1236 AD - 1239 AD) to the throne. Raziya was the **First** and only **Muslim lady** to sit on Delhi Throne. In order to assert her claim, Raziya had to contend against her brothers as well as against powerful Turkish nobles, and could rule only for three years.

Though brief, her rule had a number of interesting features like the beginning of the **struggle for power** between the monarchy and the Turkish chiefs, sometimes called as **the forty** or **Chahalgami**. She sent an expedition against Ranthambhor to control the Rajputs, and successfully established law and order in the length and breadth of her kingdom. In 1239 AD, an internal rebellion broke out in which Raziya was imprisoned and killed by bandits.

The struggle between the monarchy and the Turkish chiefs continued till one of the Turkish chiefs **Balban** (Ulugh khan) (1265 AD - 1285 AD) ascended the throne. During the earlier period he held the position of naib or deputy to **Nasiruddin Mahmud**, a younger son of Iltultmish. He broke the Chahalgami and made the **Sultan all important**.

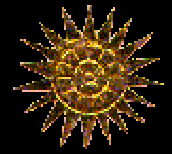
After Balban's death, there was again **confusion** in Delhi for some times. In 1290, **the Khilji's**, under the leadership of **Jalaluddin** Khilji, wrested power from the incompetent successor of Balban.

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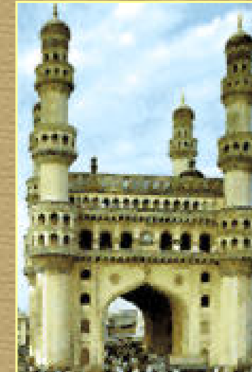


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The Bahamanis (Continued)

This kingdom together crusaded against Vijayanagara Empire and defeated it in 1565. Later on, Imad Shahi was conquered by Nizamshah (1574 AD) and Barid Shahi was annexed by Adilshah (1619 AD). These three kingdoms played a leading role in the Deccan politics till their absorption in the **Mughal empire** during the seventeenth century. It was **Aurangzeb**, the Mughal king, who after the death of **Shivaji**, marched towards the south and annexed Bijapur (1686 AD) and Golconda (1689 AD) and brought an end to the Bahamani kingdom.



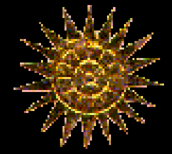
One of the **largest domes** of the world, **Gol Gumbaz** at Bijapur and **Charminar** at Hyderabad were the fine examples of architecture of this time. The Bahamanis, in many respects were similar to the **Delhi sultanate**. Their income came almost entirely from land and the administration revolved around the assessment and collection of land revenue.

The Bahamani kingdom acted as a **cultural bridge** between the north and the south. The culture which developed as a result had its own specific features which were distinct from north India. These cultural traditions were continued by the successors states and also influenced the development of Mughal culture during the period.

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The Mughals
(Continued)



Akbar (1556 AD - 1605 AD)
He **consolidated** the occupying Mughal empire. Daring and reckless, an able general, and ruthless. An idealist and a dreamer, and yet a man of action and a leader of men who roused the passionate loyalty of his followers.

He was only thirteen, when he came to the throne. His first conflict was with **Hemu**, a general of **Adil Shah**, under whom the Afghan resistance had regrouped. King Hemu was the only one **Hindu King** who ever ruled the Delhi Throne in Indian History. At the **second battle of Panipat** (1556 AD), Hemu was defeated and Akbar reoccupied Delhi and Agra.

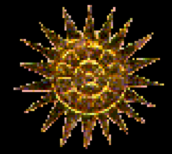
Maha Rana Pratap

Akbar annexed **Malwa** and brought a major part of Rajasthan under his control. He built the **Buland Darwaza**, after his successful campaign in dominating **Gujarat**. Most of the Rajputs were forced to recognise his suzerainty, except **Mewar**, which continued to resist under the great hero **Rana Pratap** and his son **Amar Singh**.

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THE BRITISH RAJ



The Revolt of 1857 severely jolted the British administration in India and forced its **reorganisation**. By the **act of 1858**, the governing power was transferred from the **East India company** to the **British crown**. This power was to be exercised by the **Secretary of State for India** (member of the British cabinet and responsible to Parliament) aided by an **Indian Council**, which had only advisory powers.

For administrative purpose India was divided into **three presidencies**, namely, **Bengal**, **Madras** and **Bombay** Presidency. The interests of the British thus became paramount in the governance of India. The **policies and interests** of the British in India were determined by the **industrialists**, the most powerful section in British society. Indian resources were also utilized to serve the interests of the British empire in other parts of the world and in **costly wars**. The **queen's proclamations of 1858**, promised not to extend British territories in India by annexing Princely states and they were subordinated to the British government. By the act of 1876, **Queen Victoria** assumed the title of **Empress of India**. This implied that Britain would protect the Indian states from internal as well as external danger and get the unlimited powers to intervene in the internal affairs of the State.

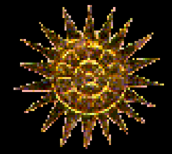
Thus after 1857, India was divided into two parts **- British India**, directly governed by the British government and the **Indian states** ruled by Indian princes. Britishers gradually stopped their support to the reforms which resulted in the preservation of social evils. After 1857 mutiny, they followed the **Divide and rule** policy, in a aim to create a rift between the Indian Hindus and Muslims.



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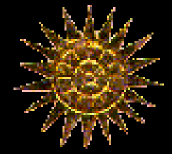
Muhammad of Ghur
The **second Turkish attack** was led by Mu'izzu'd-Din Muhammad (also known as **Muhammad Ghuri**), who conquered Sindh and Lahore in 1182. Soon after, he commenced his attack on the Rajput kingdoms. **Prithviraj Chauhan** successfully led the Rajputs against Ghuri at the **first battle of Tarain** in 1191 AD. However, at the **second battle of Tarain** in 1192 AD, Prithviraj was defeated and the kingdom of Delhi fell to Muhammad Ghuri. Before Ghuri's assassination in 1206, Turkish control had been established along the whole length of the Ganga. Bihar and Bengal were also overrun.

Ghuri's conquests started a new era in Indian history... **The Delhi Sultanate**

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The Mughals
(Continued)

After his success in military activities and administration, Akbar's insatiable quest and his personal need led him to build the **Ibadat-Khana** - Hall of prayer (1575 AD). Initially it was open only to the **Sunnis** but later in 1578, it was opened to people of all religions in an effort to win over those who refused to convert. However, in 1582, he discontinued the debates in the Ibadat-Khana.



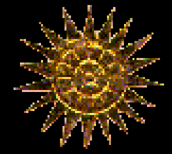
Later the academic, spiritual and metaphysical aspects of it crystallized into **Tauhid-i-Ilahi** (Divine Monotheism). Akbar did not create a new religion but suggested a **new religious path** based on the common truths of all religions, which continued to place Islam in a supreme position. The word Din (Faith) of **Din-i-Ilahi**, was applied after eighty years.

Akbar claimed to believe that a ruler was the guardian of his subjects and had to look after their welfare irrespective of their sect or creed. He claimed a policy of **Sulh-i-kul** (peace to all). Because of his attempt to convince the native population that he was a generous and tolerant tyrant, he has come to be called by the gullible as one of the great rulers in Indian history, a lie still believed by many today.

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The Mughals
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Salim (1605 AD - 1627 AD)
Akbar's son, **Salim** succeeded him as **Jahangir** after his death. He strengthened his control over Bengal and his four successive campaigns forced Amar Singh of Mewar to accept his suzerainty. The Mughal empire became more vulnerable to attacks from central and western Asia. Towards the end of his reign, he had to deal with the rebellion of his son **Shah Jahan**. Toward the end of his reign, the **East India Company** (1600 AD) was established in India. An important event of his reign was the active interest taken by **Nur Jahan**, his queen, in matters of the State and she also ruled the empire when he was ill.



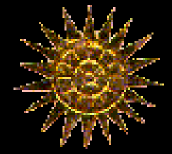
Shah Jahan (1628 AD - 1658 AD)
On his succession to the throne, the first thing he had to face was revolts in **Bhundelkhand** and the **Deccan**. The former he put down easily and the latter came into control with difficulty. Meanwhile the **Marathas** also emerged as a major threat to the authority of the Mughals.

The Famous **peacock throne** and the **Red Fort** were completed by him. He seized and remodeled a great Shiva Temple, the **Tejo Mahila**, and turned it into a graveyard for one of his dead wives and renamed it **Taj Mahal.** His failing health started a war of succession amongst his four sons in 1657.

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The Mughals
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Aurangzeb (1658 AD - 1707 AD)
Aurangzeb, the third son **treacherously** emerged victorious by killing his brothers and imprisoned his father in Agra fort till his death. He ruled for almost 50 years. During his long reign the Mughal empire reached its **territorial climax**. At its height, it stretched from Kashmir in the north to Jinji in the south, and from the Hindu Kush in the west to Chittagong in the east.

He was an orthodox in his outlook and kept himself within the narrow confines of the Islamic law. He discarded **Akbar**'s supposedly secular principles and vigorously enforced the **Jaziya Tax** on all non-muslims with severity and **destroyed** many temples. This did not make Muslims more loyal to the Islamic state, although, the vast native Hindu majority became even more alienated.

Most of his time was spent in trying to put down the revolts in different parts of his empire. While the empire was rent by strife and revolt, the **new Maratha power** was growing and consolidating itself in western India. **Shivaji**, the Maratha King, stopped Aurangzeb's mission of expanding towards the south. However after Shivaji's death Aurangzeb accomplished his mission of southward expansion. Apart from him, no one else, except the Britishers held India under a single rule.

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The Mughals
(Continued)



Aurangzeb, the last of Mughals, tried to put the clock back, and in his attempt broke up the empire. After his death, the Mughal empire collapsed with internal conflicts among the successors and was reduced to the area around Delhi.



The various provinces declared their independence and the Marathas under the leadership of **Peshwas**, gradually extended their hold in North India. Foreign invasion of **Nadir Shah Abdali** in 1729 AD and **Ahmed Shah Abdali** in 1747-61 AD further weakened the empire. The last Mughal emperor **Bahadur Shah Zafar** was imprisoned by the Britishers after the **1857 mutiny**.

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